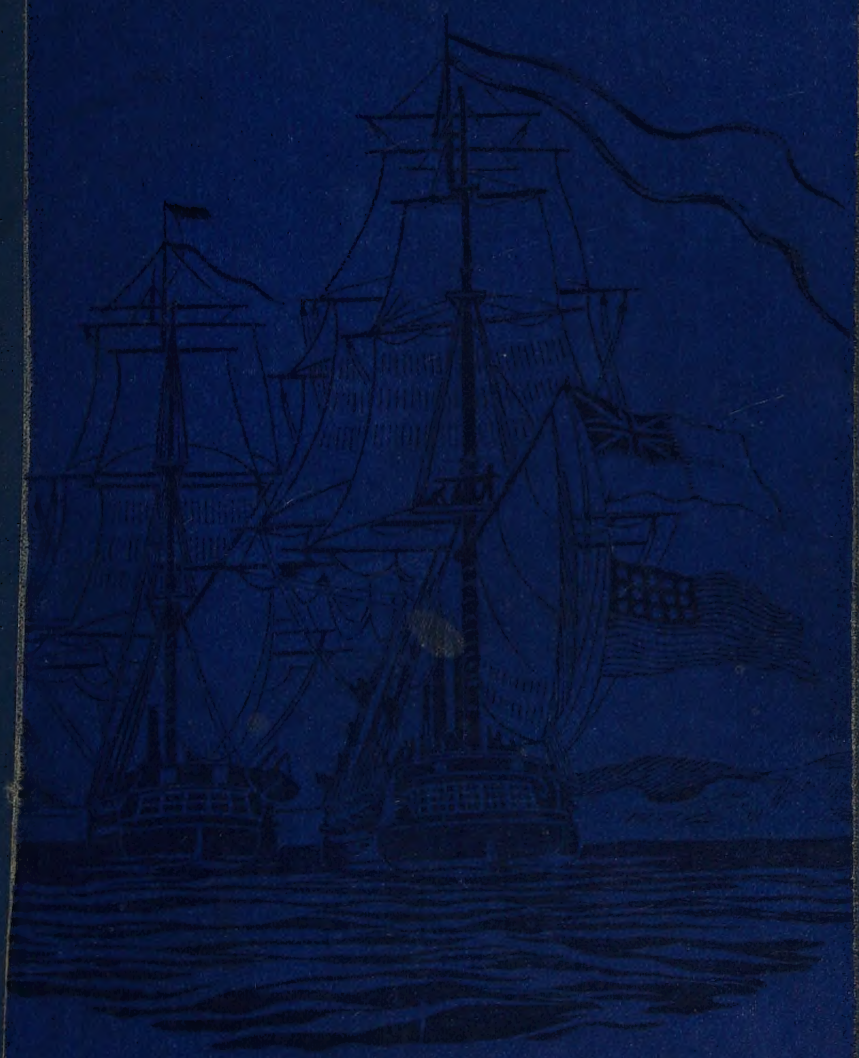
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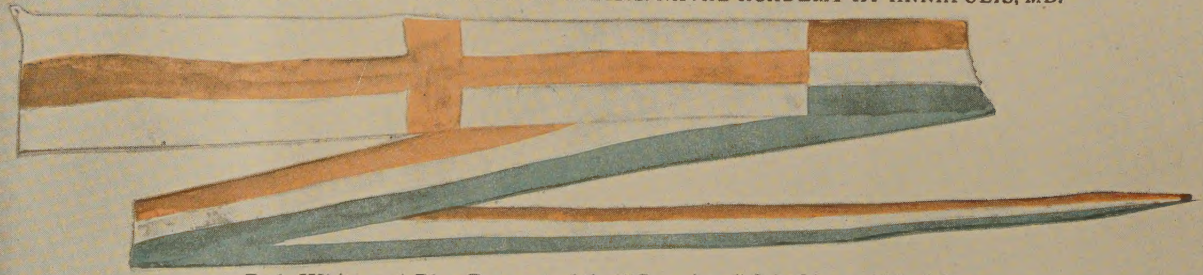
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The Glorious "Shannon's"
Old Blue Duster *and other*
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Fame. . . . . .

FIGHTING PENNANTS OF BRITISH SHIPS

IN THE COLLECTION OF TROPHIES IN THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY AT ANNAPOLIS, MD.



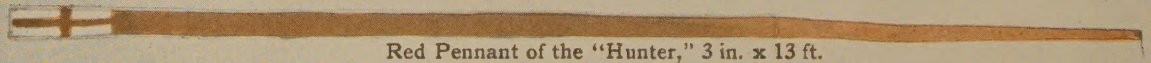
Red, White and Blue Pennant of the "Guerriere," 2 ft. 2 in. x 46 ft. 9 in.



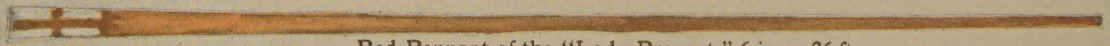
Blue Pennant of the "Detroit," 6 in. x 16 ft. 6 in.



Red Pennant of the „Queen Charlotte," 6 in. x 16 ft. 6 in.



Red Pennant of the "Hunter," 3 in. x 13 ft.



Red Pennant of the "Lady Prevost." 6 in. x 26 ft.

BRITISH FIGHTING PENNANTS OF THE WAR OF 1812

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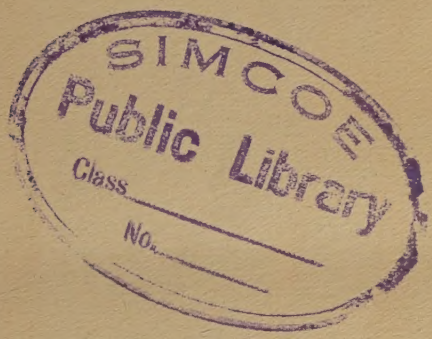
The Glorious "Shannon's" Old Blue Duster *and other* Faded Flags *of* Fadeless Fame

By C. H. J. SNIDER
Author of "In the Wake of the Eighteen Twelvers."

With a foreword from the
Rt. Hon. Sir William Thomas White, K.C.M.G.

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GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

JOHN ROSS ROBERTSON

WHO GAVE ME MY CHANCE.

Author's Note

For two things I wish to thank Mrs. Irving H. Cameron and Messrs. John R. Robinson, Irving E. Robertson, Douglas S. Robertson, and A. T. Chadwick, the trustees of the *Evening Telegram,* Toronto. I am obliged to them for the opportunity I have enjoyed of presenting, from time to time, to 110,000 Canadian patrons of their paper, these studies of the circumstances of our maritime triumphs or reverses in the period of 1812; and I appreciate their courtesy which permits the reproduction of these studies, in a more permanent form than newspaper publication, for the consideration of a wider circle of readers.

Foreword

FROM THE RT. HON. SIR WM. THOMAS WHITE K.C.M.G.

We should be better, as a nation, for more of the rugged eloquence of the unnamed patriots of fifty years ago who penned for the Public School Readers those immortal stories of the war of 1812, "The Battle of Queenston Heights," and "The *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*."

Viewed not as a year but as an epoch, 1812 was an Homeric period. Nelson had gone from the seas, but his spirit breathed in every powder-monkey and every post-captain. The earth trembled to the battle tread of the armies of Wellington and Napoleon. It was a large time, an epic age, and not inarticulate. Its war cries even now ring louder than the tumult and the shouting of the infinitely greater conflict of 1914-1918. There were so many things to "remember" in the late war that the world is rapidly forgetting. We were to "Remember Liege!" and "Remember Louvain!" and "Remember the Lusitania!" We do well to remember them; but the words of the war-cries even now are fading from our minds. Of all the battle-cries of the Great War the one most likely to survive is the "They shall not pass!" of the French at Verdun.

But our world thrills yet at Nelson's signal: "England Expects that Every Man will Do His Duty." Apocryphal or not, "Up, Guards, and at them!" has thundered down the century. "Die hard, men, die hard!" has rung from Albuera to Westminster, and

given a name to a regiment and to a political party. "Don't give up the ship," the unavailing outcry of a dying American commander, has passed into the patriotic treasury of two nations.

The North American continent, from Michillimackinac to New Orleans, the Great Lakes, from Superior to the St. Lawrence, the oceans of the world, from the midnight sunbeams of North Cape to the surging billows of the Horn, were the stages on which were played the great drama of the War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States of America. In an earlier volume, "In the Wake of the Eighteen-Twelvers," the author of this work has dealt in detail with the freshwater phases of the conflict. In the present one, inspired by the tattered battleflags surviving from the struggle, he describes those conflicts at sea in the War of 1812 which, whether they were victories or defeats, are priceless parts of the tradition of our race. Being largely guided by the presence of existing relics and souvenirs of battles he has, in several instances, departed from events connected with the strictly maritime or naval phase of the war; but this latter is his main theme; and rightly so.

The War of 1812 was begun on the sea, fought on the sea, and decided on the sea. Its land battles were heroic; but they did not determine the issue. The issue was determined by the sea power of Britain, which swept American commerce from the oceans of the world, captured more than fifty per cent. of the American navy, and held more than fifty per cent. of the remainder blockaded in American ports for the duration of the war.

Britain could have lost Canada and regained Can-

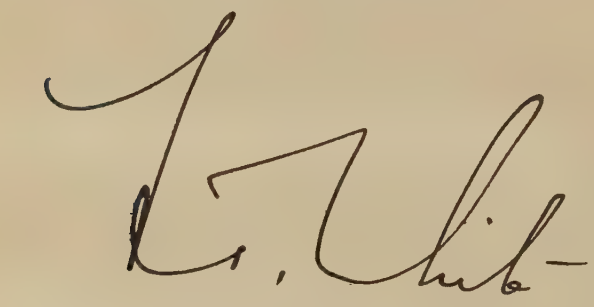
ada. Britain could not have lost command of the sea and retained existence as an empire or even as a nation.

Americans proudly and properly display such trophies as they captured in this war. The collection in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md., is a national monument, like the Statue of Liberty at New York or the Capitol at Washington. The record in the halls of Annapolis is a one-sided story, with many obliterated passages in it, as might well be, in a tale written in fire and blood on the fragments of worn and torn battleflags. With patience the gaps may be filled in, the fragments may be connected, the fabric which is shown wrong side up may be reversed, and its true colors displayed. Such is the purpose of this book. Reverent and rightful consideration of such relics as are left, at Annapolis or elsewhere, has reproduced, in the author's pages, the warp and woof of that great struggle at sea between Britain and the United States which has been sealed with a century of peace. Every Briton may, as the writer says, hold his head high in pride as the true story of each flag is told, even though that flag is a captured trophy.

Britain gave as good as she got, in 1812, as at all times; and the record is enriched by the chronicles of British prowess in victory as well as by the examples of British fortitude in disaster. A frank examination of the circumstances in which British flags were lost to Americans, and an equally frank exposition of the circumstances in which American flags were gained by British victors, brings any fair-minded person to a conclusion quite different from that widely disseminated by American writers, as to the respective merits of British and American seafighters of yore. Nor need such

examination and exposition be made under the breath and in a corner, lest the sensibilities of Americans be offended. Anglo-American amity is not a nursery seedling, whose roots must be kept constantly nourished by platitudinous flattery, nor is it a mushroom sprung from the excess richness of commercial prosperity. It is a hundred-year-old first-growth forest monarch, rooted in the living rock and virgin soil of self-respect and reared in the candid atmosphere of self-reliance. Self-respect and self-reliance are the first essentials for mutual esteem and mutual goodwill. Consideration of the conduct and character of the belligerents in 1812 cannot fail to develop self-respect and self-reliance; and British self-respect and British self-reliance are the best guarantees for the prolongation of the peace century into a millenium.

I feel I should not conclude this Foreword without a tribute of deep appreciation of the high patriotic purpose, remarkable nautical knowledge, and rare power of vivid literary expression which have enabled the author to present to the Canadian public these admirable descriptions of heroic and inspiring events in the great drama of our national history.



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The Glorious *Shannon's* Old Blue Duster

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I.

The Glorious *Shannon's* Old Blue Duster

"Because the war they did provoke
We'll pay them with our cannon
The first to do it will be Broke
In his gallant ship the *Shannon.*"

ALL day long on the First of June, 1813, a dingy weather-beaten little ship lay off Boston Light. She was a British frigate—the *Shannon,* Captain Philip Bowes Vere Broke. Her economical black paint was faded and blistered and salt-encrusted with months of blockade duty. She was short of water and of provisions; and she was alone.

At her mizzen peak a rusty blue ensign ceaselessly wig-wagged a repetition of the many challenges, verbal and written, her gallant captain had sent in to the American ships of war lying snugly in Boston harbor.

For months the *Shannon* had hovered off Boston, dispatching message after message of defiance, and capturing 25 prizes. But not one of these would Captain Broke send in to a prize court—to the great concern of his crew, who always got his share of the prize money as well as their own. He burnt these vessels; all except the recaptured Halifax brigs *Lucy* and *William.* Captain Broke spared ten of his crew to take these home. More of his three hundred gallant fellows he would not part with on any consideration.

Providence had rewarded him by bringing along the Nova Scotian privateer brig, *Sir John Sherbrooke,*

with fifty-two Irish laborers whom she had picked up on the high seas. The Paddies were immigrants from Waterford to Burin, Newfoundland, and the American privateer *Governor Plumer* had captured their ship. The *Sherbrooke* had recaptured her and enlisted the Irishmen as volunteers. With as good grace as possible she turned over twenty-two of them to the *Shannon.* Inside of forty-eight hours those seasick immigrants saw the greatest single ship fight in the War of 1812.

Captain Broke was disappointed by the *Constitution.* He wanted particularly to fight that ship, the "Old Ironsides" of the American navy, and he knew she was in Boston. She was being rebuilt, and could not go to sea. But in the splendor of the late afternoon of this first June day there came out against the dingy *Shannon* a Yankee frigate glistening in the new paint and gilt work of a complete refit, blazing with Stars and Stripes and streamers and the banner "FREE TRADE AND SAILORS' RIGHTS."

This was the *Chesapeake,* chosen champion of the United States; a smaller ship than the *Constitution* but slightly larger than Capt. Broke's vessel.

The *Shannon,* stripped to reefed topsails like a prize fighter in trunks, acknowledged the presence of the oncoming ship by hoisting her Union Jack at the fore.

"Sir, can't we have a new ensign? The enemy's showing three," ventured a common seaman to the *Shannon's* commander.

"No, lads," answered Captain Broke,—and question and answer are eloquent of the relations that must have existed between captain and crew—"We've always been

an unassuming ship. One ensign at a time is enough for us. But roll up another one and seize it in the main-rigging, to be ready if our first is shot away. Then roll up another, and seize it on the mainstay, in case the second is shot away."

That sounded promising and the tars filled their chests for a deep sea roar of approval.

"No cheering, lads," Captain Broke said. "Go quietly to your quarters. I feel sure you will do your duty. As the *Chesapeake* passes let every man who is not working lie flat. No firing till the aftermost 18-pounder bears into the second port from forward on the *Chesapeake's* maindeck. Then each gun as it bears. Remember, fire into her quarters, maindeck into maindeck, quarterdeck into quarterdeck. Kill the men, and the ship is yours."

The *Shannon* was kept, by reduction and manipulation of canvas, at the lowest possible speed, and yet under control, as the enemy came up from behind. It was a palpitating moment. With every muscle taut, every sense strained, the *Shannon's* helmsman and wheel reliefs stood as though petrified by the quiet "Steady as she goes!" from the quartermaster at the con.

Had the enemy turned sidewise so as to sweep the length of the *Shannon's* decks with a "raking" broadside, a sharp "Hard-a-starboard;" or "Hard-a-larboard!" would have sent the wheel spokes spinning and the *Shannon* would have turned too, so as to take the iron blast across her decks and not throughout their length.

Glorious as a new crowned monarch the *Chesapeake* came straight on down the wake of the wester-

ing sun, shifting helm at the last moment so as to slowly overlap the waiting *Shannon* and fight broadside to



CAPT. JAMES LAWRENCE, OF THE *CHESAPEAKE.*
From the painting by Gilbert Stuart.

broadside, fifty yards apart, larboard to starboard, her left side to the *Shannon's* right.

Capt. Broke's Challenge to the "Chesapeake"

On the morning of the battle Capt. Broke sent into Boston one more challenge, by means of a Capt. Slocum, of Marblehead, whose boat had fallen into his hands. From the masthead of the *Shannon* Capt. Broke watched the little craft on her journey and saw that the *Chesapeake* was coming out too soon to have received this last challenge. He had, however, every reason to believe that his preceding challenges had produced the result. The wording of the message reflects credit on the sender; he was fair to a fault, overstating, if anything, his own resources, and giving his opponent generous opportunities as to time and place of meeting. Broke did not insist on the battle being fought as soon as the *Chesapeake* rounded the lighthouse. That was Lawrence's choice. The great captain's great letter is thus given:

"As the *Chesapeake* appears now ready for sea, I request you will do me the favor to meet the *Shannon* with her, ship to ship, to try the fortune of our respective flags.

"The *Shannon* mounts 24 guns upon her broadside, and one light boat-gun; 18-pounders upon her main deck, and 32-pound carronades on her quarterdeck and forecastle, and is manned with a complement of 300 men and boys (a large proportion of the latter), besides 30 seamen, boys and passengers who were taken out of captured vessels lately.

"If you will favor me with any plan of signals or telegraph, I will warn you should any of my friends be too nigh, while you are in sight, until I can detach them out of the way. Or I would sail under a flag of truce to any place you think safest from our cruisers, hauling it down when fair, to begin hostilities. Choose your terms, but let us meet. I entreat you, sir, not to imagine that I am urged by mere personal vanity to the wish of meeting the *Chesapeake,* or that I depend only upon your personal ambition for your acceding to this invitation. We have both nobler motives. You will feel it as a compliment if I say that the result of our meeting may be the most grateful service I can render to my country; and I doubt not that you, equally confident of the success, will feel convinced that it is only by repeated triumphs in *even combat* that your little navy can now hope to console your country for the loss of that trade it can no longer protect. Favor me with a speedy reply. We are short of provisions and water, and cannot stay long here."

Although he scarcely knew a man in the ship, no mistrust of his new crew, no shadow of his coming fate fell on Captain James Lawrence as he brought the *Chesapeake* gallantly on. It was Lawrence who had sunk the *Peacock* three months before this; Lawrence it was who had blockaded the *Bonne Citoyenne* in Bahia for weeks. He was in the full flower of a highly successful career and had just been promoted to one of the largest frigates in the American service. True, his strict and immediate orders were to cut off troop ships and supply vessels from England to Canada in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, not to fight the *Shannon;* but glory blinded him to the dull demand of duty. A puncheon of handcuffs for the prisoners he expected to take stood on the *Chesapeake's* deck. A fleet of pleasure vessels crowded with naval officers and other would-be spectators of the promised victory followed at a safe distance in the *Chesapeake's* wake. The tables were already spread for a banquet in Boston that evening in celebration of the encounter.

Full of just pride in his fine new command, the reward of previous successes, and confident in further favors from fortune, Captain Lawrence stood at the quarterdeck break as the *Chesapeake* neared the *Shannon,* clad as for the ball-room, in full dress uniform; a shining captain of a shining ship.

" 'Peacock' her, lads! 'Peacock' her!" were his last words to his assembled crew.

Flushed by his enthusiasm and—as some American writers say, by the grog which went round in buckets—the men broke into three cheers.

Aboard the *Shannon* all this while the long tense

silence stretched unendingly after Captain Broke's grim "Kill the men!"

The tinkle of the wake round the *Shannon's* rudder post could be heard on deck as she slowly slipped through the summer sea. It was so quiet that across the water Captain Lawrence's " 'Peacock' her! 'Peacock' her!" came plainly ere it was drowned in the Yankee cheering.

Suddenly the roar of an 18-pounder on the *Shannon's* lower deck told that William Mindham, captain of the fourteenth gun, had sighted the "second port from forward."

Gun No. 13 bellowed immediately afterwards. One gun from the *Chesapeake* answered. Then Twelve! Eleven! Ten! Nine! and so on, of the lower deck eighteen-pounders of the *Shannon,* and her spar-deck carronades, in a tremendous drum fire. This was punctuated by the *Chesapeake's* whole broadside, three times, at two-minute intervals, as she slowly passed; and terminated by a second complete crashing broadside from the *Shannon.*

A thirty-two pound ball from the *Chesapeake* crashed into the passage way to the *Shannon's* magazine; but the far sighted Capt. Broke had taken pains to have this part of the ship thoroughly dampened and no explosion resulted.

Every other gun in the *Shannon* fired at one discharge two cannon balls and a hundred-and-fifty-pound keg of musket bullets; the alternate guns were loaded with one round shot—an 18-pound cannon ball—and one double headed shot. This blizzard of lead and iron was blown at men behind oak bulwarks less than 200 feet away!



FIRST BLOOD IN GREAT FIGHT ON THE 1ST OF JUNE, 1813

5.50 p.m.—The *Shannon,* waiting till the *Chesapeake* slowly overlaps her, fires the first gun.

From Capt. King's picture of the battle, in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, Toronto Public Library.



AFTER SIX MINUTES OF BRITISH BROADSIDES

5.56 p.m.—The *Chesapeake* "in irons," with wheel crews killed and captain dying, backs down on the *Shannon*—From Capt. King's series in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures.

The Americans replied with grape—iron balls an inch or so in diameter, bound together in clusters—and round shot like ours, from their big guns; and they also used chain, bar and star shot; cannon balls joined in pairs like dumbells, or chained together; iron bars, fastened together by rings or links and folded up to go into the gun muzzles; even bayonet blades, loosely bound with rope yarn into deadly bundles. These tools were for cutting the rigging to pieces so that the unsupported masts would fall; but the ammunition most denounced was the American canister and "langridge," —old nails, knife blades, jagged copper and iron bolts and scrap metal generally, done up in cans and fired from cannon to "the great torture of the wounded." In addition marines and musket men in both ships fired small arms as fast as they could load, the British using bullets and the Americans adding three buck shot loose in the powder charges.

The sharpshooters in the *Shannon's* tops said afterwards that with every discharge of her great guns the splinters of wrecked bulwarks, boats, deck spars, hammock nettings, and other furniture flew across the *Chesapeake* in such clouds that they could not pick off their targets. And while it lasted the storm of death was just as dark aboard the *Shannon*. Many fell; but not a man flinched.

For six minutes—from 5.50 to 5.56 p.m.—as the *Chesapeake* angled past, slanting more and more towards the wind and away from the *Shannon* as she got out of control, it was, so to speak, a stand-up fight with bare fists. Gun for gun the ships were equal, and ball for ball. Ship for ship and crew for crew the *Chesapeake* was the bigger—but not the better. The

like of Captain Broke and his *Shannon* men sailed not the salt seas.

Through the flying flinders of the *Chesapeake* one form shone clear to the marksmen's sights—the big frame of her young commander. From his perch beside the swivel gun in the *Shannon's* maintop, Lieut. John Law, of the Royal Marines, took steady aim at the tall and splendid figure and fired. Captain Lawrence dropped to the deck, a musket ball through his body.

HE fell at a critical moment. Whole crews had been swept from the *Chesapeake's* wheel by the accurate British musketry fire, and head sail had been shot away until the ship had got "in irons"—that is, headed up to the wind and lost steerage way. The sailing master, the principal officer concerned in getting her out of this predicament, had been killed, and the first lieutenant, who might have taken his place, was mortally wounded.

The *Chesapeake* was drifting backwards on to the *Shannon*. Captain Lawrence had seen that she would fall foul and gave the order "Call the boarders!" But the negro bugler, quaking with fright, could not blow a note and fled from his post. "Call the boarders!" had to be passed by word of mouth to the crews below in the smoke-filled gun deck.

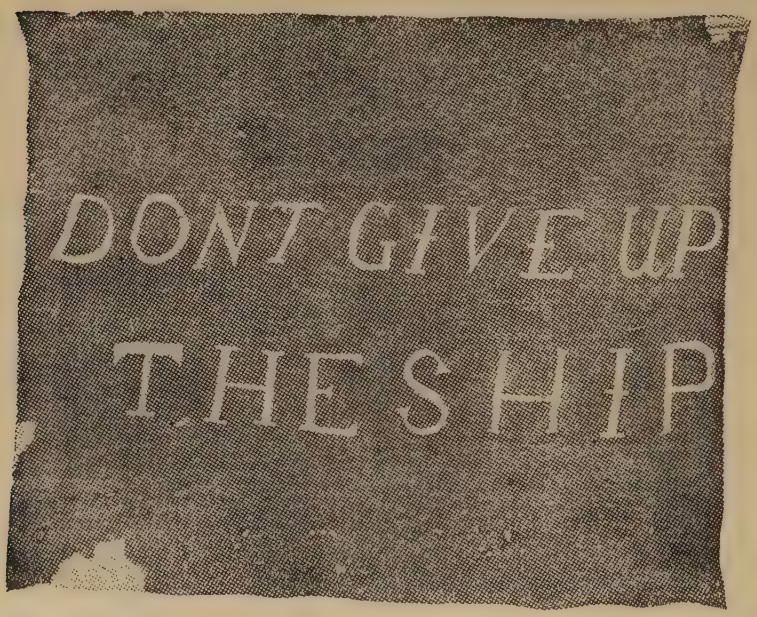
It was at this juncture, six minutes after the *Shannon's* first shot, that Capt. Lawrence was struck down.

"Blow her up! Sink her! Don't give up the ship!" he gasped as they carried him below.

Such was the birth of the most famous of war cries of the period of "Eighteen-Twelve." It was less heroic in its origin than in its application. It was rather the

sob of despair than the clarion of victory. Yet Commodore Perry, going into the Battle of Lake Erie, three months later, in a ship named for the dead hero, with a

LAWRENCE'S DYING WORDS—A BATTLE FLAG FROM LAKE ERIE



This hundred and ten year old survivor of the period when England and the United States were at war is still in existence at Annapolis, Md., in the Naval Academy Museum. It is a squarish flag, ten feet one inch long and eight feet wide. On the blue bunting are sewn letters of linen, once white, now faded to brown. The old flag looks, in the picture, to be almost intact. As a matter of fact, it is in innumerable fragments, all skilfully overcast with blue thread of the exact shade of the faded original, and so secured to a linen backing. This is the identical flag which Perry flew in the battle of Lake Erie, Sept. 11th, 1813, in his flagship, the *Lawrence,* and which he carried from her to the *Niagara* before the *Lawrence* was forced to strike her colors to the gallant and unfortunate British commander, Robert Heriot Barclay.

motto flag carrying Lawrence's last words—a flag still in existence—turned initial defeat into final triumph; and for generations Lawrence's cry has proved an inspira-

tion in times of stress and danger to his countrymen and to all men of his speech—

"Don't Give Up The Ship!"

There was confusion aboard the *Chesapeake* as she drifted back towards the *Shannon.* All her deck officers above the rank of midshipman were dead or dying. The second lieutenant, Mr. George Budd, on whom the command devolved, was forward on the gun deck below, and did not know what had happened. The third lieutenant, Mr. U. S. Cox, came up from the gun deck at the call for boarders, but turned back with those who were carrying Captain Lawrence down.

On the *Shannon,* amid that blast of bullets, star, bar, chain, round, and grape shot, all was steadiness and precision.

Captain Broke saw the *Chesapeake* first turning away towards the wind, and luffed his own ship to follow her. Seeing her in irons and drifting down on him he coolly decided to delay the moment of contact as long as possible. He believed the *Chesapeake* had a hundred more men than the *Shannon,* and every second that could elapse before the ships touched would enable his great guns and muskets to reduce the odds against the *Shannon's* crew—especially as, the *Chesapeake,* from her position, was now taking the *Shannon's* sho' diagonally. She was being half-raked.

Captain Broke starboarded the *Shannon's* helm to swing her away from the approaching foe, but his good ship was almost as much cut up forward as the *Chesapeake,* and her head fell off from the wind very slowly.

When the ships were close enough the *Shannon* crew hurled hand-grenades. Perhaps it was one of these, or perhaps a musket flash, which exploded an open cask

of cartridges on the *Chesapeake's* quarterdeck. There was a tremendous burst of flame, which seemed to clothe the ship as high as her lower yards, but it did no material damage, and the spars immediately above the cask were only scorched.

Four minutes after Captain Lawrence fell the ships touched, the port quarter or left-hand corner of the stern of the *Chesapeake* striking the *Shannon* just forward of the main rigging. The *Chesapeake* had almost regained headway, and she ground along in a forward direction until the iron work outside of her—the mizzen channels or chain plates,—hooked on the fluke of the anchor the *Shannon* had stowed over the starboard chess-tree.

Captain Broke saw the American gun crews leaving their guns. He thought they were flinching, although they were in reality answering the delayed call, "Boarders stand by!" and running for their pikes and cutlasses stowed around the masts.

Judging this to be the crucial moment, Captain Broke gave the order "Make fast! Call quarter deck and gun deck boarders!"

One of the things for the attacker to make sure of, in a boarding fight, is that the ships shall not separate. Woe betide the handful of boarders left marooned on the enemy's deck with an increasing extent of salt sea between them and their own ship!

William Stevens, the *Shannon's* boatswain, who, as the historian James relates, had fought under Rodney thirty years before, in the great fleet-action known as the Battle of the Saintes Passage, sprang over the *Shannon's* side and lashed the two ships together.

Americans shot at him with muskets and hacked at

THE *CHESAPEAKE'S* QUARTERDECK AS THE BRITISH BOARDED

From the old lithograph by Heath in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures. Note the cocked hats of the officers. "Let me alone!" protested Capt. Rotherham at Trafalgar, when urged to change his headgear for something less conspicuous. "Let me alone; I've always fought in a cocked hat, and I always will!"

him with cutlasses and the gallant old man's left arm was almost hewed off at the shoulder as he worked. But his lashings held.

At two minutes past six Captain Broke, sword in hand, led twenty *Shannon* men over the rail, deliberately stepping from his own forecastle gangway to the muzzle of the *Chesapeake's* aftermost carronade—which could have blow them all to eternity, had it been fought. From gunlip to gunwale he mounted, then down he leaped on to the enemy quarterdeck.

Chaplain Samuel Livermore, of the *Chesapeake,* fired a pistol at him as he leaped, but the shot went wild. Broke cut him down with a sweep of his broad Toledo blade but did not kill him.

The ten marines left of the forty-four who fought on the *Chesapeake's* quarterdeck, made a brave fight. But a Portuguese boatswain's mate led the rush below, removing the gratings of the berth deck as he went. Broke halted his handful till Lieutenants G. T. L. Watt and Falkiner, the *Shannon's* first and third, brought their divisions of boarders over the rail, and then rushed forward, sweeping the *Chesapeake's* crew from stern to stem.

As Lieutenant Watt sprang on to the *Chesapeake's* taffrail a shower of bullets from her mizzentop mortally wounded Midshipman John Samwell and struck the Lieutenant in the foot. He pitched forward on to the deck, but picked himself up and called for the *Shannon's* 9-pounder boat gun to be pointed at the top, the masthead platform from which the upper sails were worked and where sharpshooters were stationed in battle.

Out along the *Shannon's* starboard mainyard arm swarmed Midshipman Cosnahan, and as fast as the top-

men in the *Shannon's* maintop could pass him muskets he fired them into the *Chesapeake's* mizzentop. This and the shot from the 9-pounder cleaned out that "pillbox," and the *Chesapeake's* maintop was stormed by Midshipman William Smith and his five foretopmen. They scrambled along their own foreyard on to the *Chesapeake's* mainyard, and from this aerial bridge, sixty feet above the sea, killed her topmen or drove them down the rigging. Down the back stays the British tars followed them and joined their comrades who were rushing the deck.

All this takes long to tell, but it was the work of seconds only. Captain Broke was sweeping forward, some of his boarders fighting the lower deck gun crews as they rushed up through the hatchways, others clearing the gangways as they pressed toward the bow.

On the *Chesapeake's* forecastle they had a barrel of unslaked lime to throw into the eyes of the boarders, and a bag of the same stuff in the foretop. But a cannon ball knocked the barrel to staves and the lime was blown into the faces of the Americans; and the men in the foretop failed to use their sack.

Boatswain Stevens' lashings held, but the *Chesapeake's* quarter gallery to which they were fastened tore away from her hull and the locked ships separated. Perhaps it was this that gave the enemy heart. Rallied by the heroic exertions of the second lieutenant, coming up from below, all smoke-blackened and powder-stained, and encouraged by the example of the brave first lieutenant, who, mortally wounded, staggered back from the surgeon's room, some of the Americans forward put up a fight. They were overpowered, and Captain Broke turned to clean up the combats he had passed at the hatchway.

A cry from William Mindham, the seaman who had fired the first gun, warned him of danger. A group of *Chesapeake* men, breaking free, rushed at him. The first lunged at him with a pike. Captain Broke parried, and wounded this man in the face. A second, swinging his clubbed musket, struck the British captain such a blow on the head that his scalp was dragged over his eyes and he fell to his knees. A third slashed him with a broad-sword, laying his brain bare. William Mindham killed this fellow ere he could repeat the blow, and the crowding British boarders rushed the forecastle.

Captain Broke strove to free himself from the grip of the man with the pike, whom he had wounded, and who was now clutching him in a death struggle. An eager British marine aimed a bayonet blow at the writhing pair which threatened to transfix his commander.

"Tut, tut, you fool, don't you know your own captain?" Broke found breath to pant.

The bayonet swerved and the pikeman's grip suddenly relaxed. He had been pierced through the heart. The boarders who stormed the forecastle killed every foe who stood up.

In the midst of the British vengeance for the attack on their beloved captain a young American midshipman came sliding down a rope from the foretop.

"I surrender! Save me!" he cried.

"Give him a chance!" Captain Broke shouted, and that saved the lad's life.

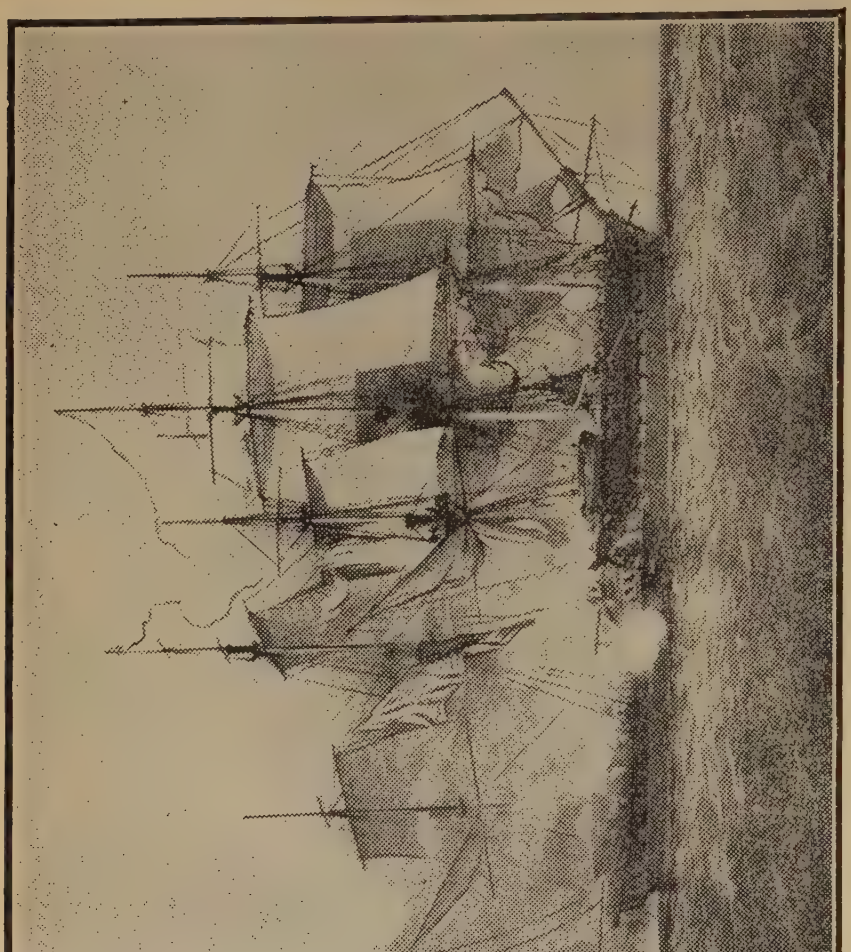
"For God's sake, Bill!" exclaimed another of the enemy as Mindham thrust at him, backed against the bulwarks.

"What, you, Jack?" returned the gun-captain as he recognized John Waters, of Bristol, a shipmate, who had deserted in Halifax a few months before.

"Ay—but it won't do," cried Jack, despairingly. "If you don't kill me a noose at the yardarm will. Good-bye!"—and the wretch leaped over the lime-strewn bows into the sea.

Sneer not at poor Jack Waters. He was not the only British sailor in the *Chesapeake*. Thirty-two were found aboard her, and twenty-five of them afterwards enlisted in the British navy. No ship that anchored in American waters before the war, says James, could send a boat ashore without having the crew assailed by the importunities of a recruiting party for some American frigate. Crimps and kidnappers were paid liberally for every seaman they could supply, drunk or drugged, sober or sorry. Once aboard an American man-o'-war, British sailors were almost between the devil and the deep sea. One honest fellow, John Erving, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, at the outbreak of the war, applied. very reasonably, for his release from the American frigate *Essex,* in which he had been serving, explaining that he was British born, and not a naturalized American, and would be hanged if captured. He was tarred and feathered on board the *Essex* and put ashore in New York in that plight—a fine illustration of those "Sailor's Rights" for which, according to the motto-flag at the *Chesapeake's* masthead, Americans were battling!

Midshipman Smith, who had descended after cleaning out the *Chesapeake's* maintop, helped William Mindham lift Captain Broke to his feet and commenced binding his forehead with a handkerchief.



THE END OF THE CONFLICT

6.06 p.m.—The *Chesapeake's* colors come down, sixteen minutes at most—some say fourteen minutes—after the first gun was fired by the *Shannon* on June 1, 1813.—From Capt. King's series in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures.

Looking aft through the blood that half blinded him, the *Shannon's* captain saw an appalling sight—the gap between him and his own ship widening, and the American colors being hoisted again on the *Chesapeake's* quarterdeck, with the British flag below them!

There was a crash from the receding *Shannon,* the colors hung for a second half-hoisted, then fluttered down to the deck. In a moment they rose again through the smoke, but this time the little British flag—a mere boat ensign on a pike, brought by the boarders—went up on top, with the Stars and Stripes below it.

"There, sir," cried Mindham, as he finished knotting the handkerchief, "up goes the old ensign over the Yankee colors!"

There had been a horrible mistake. Brave Lieutenant Watt, despite the pain of the wound in his foot, had dragged himself to the *Chesapeake's* ensign halliards, hauled down her flag, and bent on the British boat flag. In his haste and suffering he either toggled the British flag below the American, or else began to haul on the wrong part of the endless flag halliards—something every sailor has done at least once. So it was that the Stars and Stripes began to rise again, apparently in triumph, as the two ships separated. The *Shannon* gunners, unable to distinguish who was doing the hoisting in the smoke, fired promptly at the group around the mizzen mast. Grape shot took off the top of Lieutenant Watt's head, and five of the sailors with him were killed ere the fatal mistake was realized and the colors re-hoisted.

Shots still came from the *Chesapeake's* hold, killing one marine and wounding others, and the British, in command of the deck, fired muskets down the hatches.

"Tell them," said Capt. Broke from where he rested on a carronade, "to surrender if they want quarter."

Lieutenant Falkiner did so, and the helpless Americans shouted up: "We surrender!"

The firing ceased—sixteen minutes at most after Wm. Mindham had pulled the lockstring of the first gun; four minutes after Captain Broke had led his boarders over the rail!

Then that marvellous mind, which despite pistol balls, sabre slashes and musket butts had never for a moment relaxed its control of the whole situation, gave its final order:

"Back the mainyard and haul up the foresail till the *Shannon* closes with us!"

As his own "unassuming ship" shortened the hundred-yard gap which now separated the vessels, Captain Broke fainted from loss of blood.

ON the 6th of June, 1813, five days after the great duel off Boston Light, past the thronged wharves in Halifax Harbor and the tall checker-sided square-riggers swinging at anchor in the Stream came the stateliest procession that historic port will ever witness. Two ships; the leading one the *Shannon,* more dingy and blistered looking than ever; "a little, black, dirty ship," as Professor MacMechan quotes from Aunt Susan Etter, who was a thirteen-year-old Halifax girl at the time; and behind the *Shannon,* still shining from her recent refit, but gay with different bunting than she had worn earlier in the week, steered the *Chesapeake.*

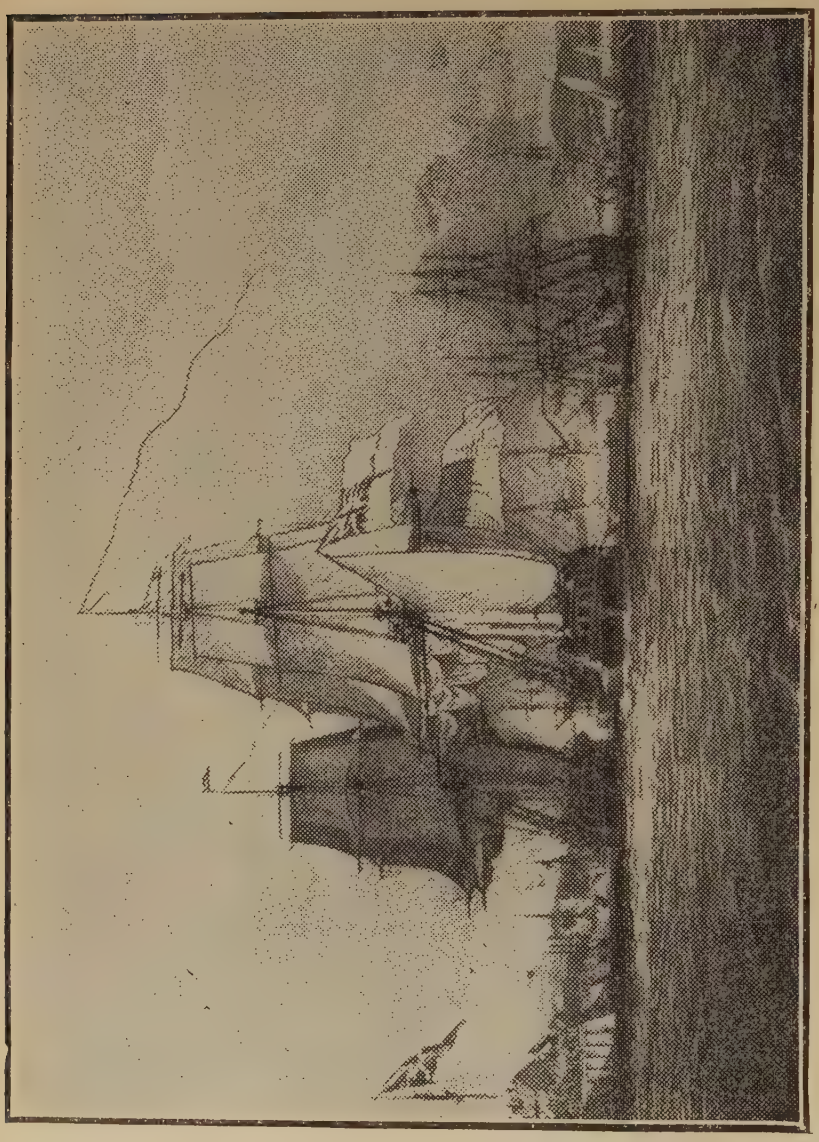
Her gaiety and glitter were the mask of death. Close glances showed her bulwarks, ports and cabin windows beaten in by broadsides; on the quarterdeck,

draped in the Stars and Stripes he had gallantly defended, lay the body of her young commander. He had died on the passage, two days after getting the wound which lost him his ship. Below—to quote Judge Haliburton and his friend, who visited the *Chesapeake*:

"She was like a perfect charnel house. Her main deck from forward of the mast to the extreme stern of the vessel was covered with hammocks, in which lay the wounded, the dying and the dead; each hammock had a cord or rope suspended to it from the roof of the deck so that the poor fellows might lay hold of it and ease themselves up. Very many lay writhing in their wounds.

"The deck had not been cleaned (for reasons of necessity which were obvious enough) and the coils and folds of rope were steeped in gore as in a slaughter house. She was a fir built ship and her splinters had wounded nearly as many as the *Shannon's* shot. Pieces of skin and pendent hair were adhering to the sides of her; and in one place I noticed fingers protruding, as if thrust through the outer wall of the frigate; whilst several of the sailors, to whom liquor had evidently been handed through the portholes by visitors in boats, were lying asleep on the bloody floor, as if they had fallen in action and had expired where they lay."

Not for Captain Broke the flaunting bunting, the long streamers, the ensign hoisted above the foe's flags, the cheering and the waving hats and handkerchiefs. Silent in his cannon-crowded cabin he lay, unconscious, his life hanging by a thread, a sentry at the door halting all who approached. So critical was his condition from the terrible bludgeoning he had received in the hand-to-hand fight that carried the *Chesapeake* that for days



THE *SHANNON'S* TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO HALIFAX

THE *SHANNON'S* TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO HALIFAX WITH HER PRIZE THE *CHESAPEAKE,* JUNE 6TH, 1813.—

From Capt. King's engraving in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures. The British flag floating in triumph over the Stars and Stripes is manifestly neither the "rusty blue ensign" the *Shannon* flew during the battle, nor the boat flag first hoisted after the combat with the tragic results just told. The flag shown here is the White Ensign of the British navy, in existence in the war of 1812 as now, but not so generally used. Capt. King was not, however, a literalist in the matter of flags. Note the number of stripes on the American ensign. The correct number at that date was fifteen—since reduced to thirteen. The flags of the *Chesapeake* and *Shannon* were eminently worthy of preservation among the first trophies of the British nation. Needless to say, the *Shannon's* ensign is not a member of that most interesting collection in the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. The Royal United Service Institution, in Whitehall, in London, possesses a fragment of a flag of the *Chesapeake,* obtained in quite curious fashion. It was purchased by Mr. Astor, father of the present Lord Astor, at an auction at Messrs. Debenham, Storr and Son's rooms in London, on January 30th, 1908, for $4,250, and presented by him to the Institution—a remarkable example of an American trophy, won by British valour, finding a British resting place a century later through American generosity. The fragment is slightly more than one quarter of the original flag, the remainder having been shot away by cannon balls or consumed by moths. The remnant contains fifteen white stars in a blue field, and portions of three of the red and white stripes.

none but physicians were allowed to come on board his ship.

There is a white stone in St. Paul's churchyard in Halifax—almost the only white stone in the great grove of brown and grey memorials whose dates touch three centuries. The stone is the replica of the grey original now preserved in St. Paul's Church itself. It commemorates a boy and a man already honorably mentioned in this account of the great battle. The dates on it tell a story of the long days and nights of agony the wounded endured within the wooden walls of the surgeon's cockpit and sick bay of all ships, victors or vanquished, in that era of bloody surgery, without anaesthetics and without antiseptics. Its inscription reads:

SACRED TO THE
MEMORY
OF
MR. JOHN SAMWELL,
MIDSHIPMAN OF H.M.S.
"SHANNON"
WHO DIED ON THE 13 OF
JUNE 1813 AGED 18 YEARS ALSO
MR. WILLIAM STEVENS BOATSWAIN
OF THE SAME SHIP WHO DIED
THERE ON THE 19 OF JUNE 1813
AGED 36 YEARS. THOSE BRAVE
OFFICERS CLOSED THEIR CAREER
IN CONSEQUENCE OF DESPERATE
WOUNDS RECEIVED IN THE
GALLANT ACTION BETWEEN
THEIR OWN SHIP AND THE
AMERICAN FRIGATE "CHESEPAK"
ON THE 1 OF JUNE 1813
WHICH
ENDED IN THE CAPTURE OF
THE ENEMY SHIP IN
14 MINUTES

It is quite possible that the Halifax stonecutter was as much in error in the "36 years" allotted to Boatswain Stevens as he was in the *Chesepak* spelling of the American ship's name. If the gallant boatswain were born in 1777 he would have been only five years old at the time of the Battle of the Saintes, 1782, at which, says James, he was present. Rodney, under whom he served, made his own son post-captain at fifteen, but even he would hardly make a five-year-old child a boatswain! An examination of the original stone shows that the figures in the boatswain's age have been in part obliterated, and the "36" may well have been "56," which would harmonize with the information given by James, who was himself in Halifax in 1813.

Others of the crew of the *Shannon* and of the *Chesapeake* died of their wounds while the ships were refitting in Halifax, and were buried at the dockyard cemetery.

The resting place of the Americans is unmarked; but a square of granite stands at the head of a grave or graves overlooking the naval dockyard from the eastward-sloping face of the hill. An inscription reads:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE SEAMEN WHO DIED IN THIS HOSPITAL OF THE WOUNDS THEY RECEIVED ON BOARD H.M.S "SHANNON" IN THE GLORIOUS ACTION IN WHICH SHE CAPTURED THE UNITED STATES FRIGATE "CHESAPEAKE" ON THE FIRST OF JUNE, 1813.

OWEN CALLAGHAN
PETER LAWSON
FRANCIS ALBERT
FRANCIS DIXON
JOHN ANTHONY.

Gallant British bluejackets! May they rest well.

Captain Lawrence and his brave first officer Lieutenant Ludlow, were buried in Halifax, in what is now St. Paul's cemetery, opposite Government House, with all the honors of war, the military and naval officers of the port attending. Among these was Samuel Blyth, the young commander of His Majesty's brig *Boxer,* fated soon in turn to fill a foreign grave. Some weeks later the bodies of the two Americans were exhumed and placed aboard an American cartel and taken to Salem, Mass., and later to New York for interment. Where "Trinity's undaunted steeple" still strives to aspire beneath the frowning skyscrapers of Broadway lies the reckless, but gallant, American who on June 1st, 1813, sealed the signal "Don't Give Up The Ship" with his heart's blood.

CAPTAIN BROKE lived. But he was never the same man. His is the splendid and tragic figure of one manifestly chosen by God for the performance of one great deed; in his case the assertion, past all peradventure, of Britain's charter:

"Rule Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!"

the proof that, despite signs and tokens five times repeated, the sceptre of sea supremacy still rested of right under the British flag.

Philip Bowes Vere Broke, conqueror of the *Chesapeake,* seemed born for that one purpose. The War of 1812 opened blackly for us. Five on end, the *Guerriere,* the *Frolic,* the *Java,* the *Macedonian* and the *Peacock,* were beaten by the Americans in single ship duels. There was a perfectly logical reason in each case. But the proud, unboastful British race is never satisfied with perfectly logical reasons for defeat. Five



CAPT. BROKE OF THE *SHANNON*.
From the painting by Samuel Lane.

disastrous ship duels, not one of which had any direct bearing on the fortune of the war, were particularly unendurable after twenty years of conflict with Venetians, Dutch, Danes, Spanish and French, when victory usually perched on British mastheads if odds were no worse than two to one against us. And the fact that, despite these disasters, the British navy had largely bottled up the American fleet in home harbors and completely destroyed American commerce abroad did not weigh with the pessimists.

"We must catch one of those great American ships and send her home for show," Captain Broke had written to his wife in England when things were at their blackest.

To the straightforward mind of this sailor the first and best "great American ship" to get was the one which had started the string of American triumphs, the *Constitution,* victor over the *Guerriere,* and later over the *Java.* It mattered naught to him that the *Constitution* had whipped these ships separately because she was fifty per cent. heavier, and that the *Shannon* was only of the weight of the vanquished ones. He determined to seek the *Constitution* and fight on sight.

"Well, Minns,"—so Professor Archibald MacMechan, of the delightful "Nova Scotia chap-books," records Captain Broke as saying in the spring of 1813 to a Halifax bookseller—"I am going to Boston, and I am going to challenge the *Constitution.*"

"You'll have no chance against her 24-pounders with your 18's," ventured Mr. William Minns, with sad recollections of the *Guerriere's* fate.

"I shall fight yardarm to yardarm and depend on the devotion of my three hundred men, each one of

whom will, I know, follow me to the death and stand by me to the last." This was Broke's reply, delivered with a rap of his cane and a shrug of his jaunty epaulettes. It was not his fault that the *Constitution,* as already told, did not keep the tryst.

The Admiralty gave Broke's captured *Chesapeake* a beautiful figurehead, and added her to the British navy. The lords voted him special addresses and made his lieutenants commanders, and his midshipmen lieutenants. Broke himself was made a baronet and a Knight Companion of the Bath, wearing "the ribbon which Nelson coveted, because a public token, visible to all, that the wearer had done distinguished service."

But in the quiet country gentleman who, devoted to his family, interested in his estate, and a regular church attendant, for the next thirty years roved about the old family seat of Broke Hall in Suffolk, with a copy of "Horace" in his pocket, the only identification of the famous sea fighter of 1813 was the persistent recurrence of severe trouble in the head wound which never quite healed.

The timbers of the *Chesapeake* are built into the framework of a Hampshire gristmill, which straddles a little stream falling into Southampton water. Shipbreakers secured her from the Admiralty in 1820 for $2,500, when warships were as much a drug on the market as they became a century later. In 1814 the Admiralty had purchased her for $106,570.

The old mill-timbers at Wickham in Hampshire, and a bullet-laden logbook in the United Service Museum in Whitehall, London, and a fragment of an ensign in the same institution appear to be the only existing relics of the *Chesapeake.* The log-book had

lead in its backing, to make it sink should the prospect of capture force the *Chesapeake's* commander to throw it overboard. Capt. Broke boarded too quickly, and Capt. Lawrence was too severely stricken, to permit of the intention being carried out. With a splendid care-



Shannon medal and clasp issued to John Gifford in 1848 and now in possession of his grandson, Mr. James R. Gifford, 524 Danforth Ave., Toronto.

lessness somewhat maddening to the antiquary the *Chesapeake's* flag, like nearly all the flags we captured in the War of 1812, was allowed to moulder away somewhere, neglected and forgotten. It was thirty-five years after the battle before a medal was issued com-

memorating it. One of these silver medals is in the possession of James R. Gifford, 524 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, whose grandfather, John Gifford, born in the Shetland Islands, was impressed out of a Greenland whaler when a lad of seventeen, and fought aboard the *Shannon* in the famous battle. Afterwards he volunteered for service on the Great Lakes in the War of 1812.

Of the *Shannon* not much more trace exists. She has been thus described by R. H. Dalley, of 827 Ossington Avenue, Toronto, whose grandfather also took part in her glorious capture of the *Chesapeake*:

"I saw the old *Shannon* herself in 1886. She was then kept as a training ship, in the River Shannon in Ireland, and a proud man I was to see the ship my grandfather fought in and he and my father used to sing about. Of three days' leave I spent the most of two days going over her.

"She was a fine looking old ship then, well kept and to all appearances as good as new—like the old *Victory,* that they've only now drydocked in Portsmouth. She was made of the right stuff—English oak.

"There was not a scratch nor a scar on her, to tell of the battering she had given and taken. All that had been removed long ago. The planks and timbers scored by bullets and round shot had been replaced bodily. I looked carefully for any wood in her that might show signs of decay, and begged the ship's carpenter to give me a bit if they had any left that had been taken out. But he said there was none, and it would be more than his job was worth to try to get any away from her. I was hoping I could get enough wood to make a cribbage board. I secured some from the *Victory*.

"The *Shannon* was painted black, like other ships of war at the time with a white band and black ports, making her checker-sided. She had a fine figurehead. I think it was a dolphin. Such guns as she had were the old style smooth-bore eighteen-pounders. She was quite high between decks. From the gundeck to the spardeck would be eight feet or so."

Mr. Dalley related to the author how his father, himself a veteran of the Battle of Navarin, used to invariably celebrate the anniversary of the *Shannon's* victory, in which *his* father participated, by trolling "till the roof rang again" the ballad familiar in part at least to readers of "Tom Brown at Rugby":

> Captain Broke he waved his sword
> Saying, 'My British lads, go 'board.'

A little church in Buctouche, New Brunswick, calls its worshippers to prayer by the ship's bell of the *Shannon.* The bell is said to have belonged to H.M.S *Helena* originally, and to have been transferred from her to the *Shannon,* and to have been taken from her and stored away when she was stripped at Halifax. Some time after the Anglican Church of St. Martin-in-the-Wood was built at Shediac Cape by Wm. Hanington, of London,—the first English settler in the Shediac district and grandfather of the late Supreme Court Justice Hon. D. L. Hanington,—the rector, the late Rev. George Seymour Jarvis, D.D., D.C.L., rural dean, went to Halifax and purchased the bell for five pounds. The bell hung in St. Martin's tower for many years. After the purchase of a new bell, more than thirty years ago, the bell of the *Shannon* was placed in the Anglican chapel at Cocagne, in the deanery of Shediac. Later it was transferred to the Buctouche Anglican chapel.

Halifax long cherished the memory of the *Shannon*. One of her guns is still shown in the courtyard of the Provincial building. Provo Wallis was the *Shannon's* second lieutenant. He was a Halifax lad. In those first six days and nights of June, 1813, he was never out of his clothes and hardly slept. With his first lieutenant dead and his commander wounded and semi-conscious, upon this boy fell the care of two ships—his own with 158 shot-holes in her, and leaking so that the pumps went almost continuously, and the prize, with 362 shots in her and her stern cabins and battery smashed, as Fitchett says "as though a procession of aerolites had torn through." Lieut Wallis was made a commander for his share in the battle, and died in 1891, Sir Provo Wallis, Admiral of the Fleet.

TWENTY-ONE years in the service had Captain Philip Bowes Vere Broke been when he fought his great fight; eighteen years in command of vessels large and small, but never once in a big single ship duel till he fought the *Chesapeake*. He had been seven years in the *Shannon* without meeting a ship her size. That was not for lack of trying. Singly or in squadron he had chased Hull in the *Constitution* and Porter in the *Essex* with his slow *Shannon,* but failed to bring them to battle; not even when he burned the *Essex's* convoy, the *Minerva,* before Porter's eyes.

A man of poorer stuff would have "gone to waist;" but Broke at thirty-seven was on the tips of his toes; and the untried *Shannon* was the best ship for shooting in the British navy.

When Broke was appointed to the *Shannon*, September 14th, 1806, he had to take what he could get in the way of crew—some men-of-war's men, some vic-

tims of the pressgang, and some sweepings of the jails, hospitals and prison hulks. He worked them hard but kept them happy. Far from being a floating hell the *Shannon* was much more like a little bit of heaven than the shores whose river furnished her name.

There was always ammunition ready for two whole broadsides on the *Shannon's* decks. Broke had no objection to sharing his state-room with the sternchase guns and expected his officers to accept similar inconveniences. The captain's cabin, like all others, was furnished with Spartan simplicity. What Broke saved on paint he spent on powder.

Ninety minutes every morning training the big guns; ninety minutes every afternoon at pike, broadsword and musket. Twice a week firing at targets, a pound of tobacco for every man who made a bull's eye. At any moment of day or night—if it were moonlight—a cask might be flung overboard and "Sink the cask, No. 7 gun!" or "Sink the cask, No. 14 gun!" would be the order. The crew of No. 7 or No. 14 had to cast loose their gun and fire her till the cask went under.

Such was the life in the *Shannon,* varied only by chases after merchantmen, which were usually caught, or the enemy, who were never caught, till the *Chesapeake* came out. The crew liked the grind. Captain Broke paid out of his own pocket for the ammunition he "wasted" in target practice.

Many captains in those days, says James, never put a shot in the guns till an enemy appeared. "The instructions under which the captain was bound to act forbade him to use, during the first six months after the ship had received her armament, more shots (broadsides?) per month than amounted to a third in number

of the upper deck guns." Broke ignored such instructions.

The *Shannon* was a frigate of 1,066 tons, and the *Chesapeake* of 1,135 tons. Each had fifty guns and their broadsides have been variously computed. Writers most favorable to the American viewpoint have argued for absolute equality and others have computed the weight of metal in each broadside as 570 pounds in the *Chesapeake* and 544 pounds for the *Shannon*. The *Chesapeake* had a slight advantage in measurements throughout. She was a larger ship with a larger crew and probably heavier armament. But her crew was in part new to her, and in part dissatisfied with the prize money for their last cruise. Lawrence did not know his men or his officers, and the latter did not know their crew nor one another. His acceptance of the *Shannon's* defiance was gallant, but unnecessary; reckless, and in disobedience to his instructions.

The *Shannon* had 306 men and 24 boys. The *Chesapeake* had between 381 and 443 men. The latter figure was her nominal rating, the former the actual muster shown by her senior surviving officer. As 50 of the *Constitution's* veterans came on board the *Chesapeake* that very day for the fight they may not have been entered on the ship's books. Their packed bags and bundles were found in the boats on deck after the capture.

The *Chesapeake* lost 61 killed and 55 wounded; the *Shannon* 33 killed, 50 wounded.

The duel between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon* is one of which no American need feel ashamed, and one which every British heart should remember with reverent thankfulness for its outcome; not in savage

triumph, not gloatingly, not in any spirit of treasured hate and malice; but with gratitude that when Captain Broke's clock struck twelve it was not the signal that Britain's noon was o'er, but that a new day had dawned; the black chain of defeats in the War of 1812 was broken, never to be re-forged.

"BRAVE BROKE"

This is the ballad with which the *Shannon's* great victory used to be celebrated on the anniversary of the fight—rough in its metre, but with a fine swing:

A Yankee stout and bold,
As from Boston, we've been told,
Came to take a British frigate,
Neat and handy, oh.
The people all in port
They came out to see the sport,
With their music playing
"Yankee Doodle Dandy," oh.

Now this British frigate's name,
All for that purpose came
To pull down the Yankee's colors
Neat and handy, oh.
'Twas the *Shannon* Captain Broke,
And his crew was hearts of oak,
And in fighting, you'll allow,
They're quite the dandy, oh.

Before the fight begun,
The Yankees with much fun,
Said, "We'll tow her into Boston
Neat and handy, oh.
And after that we'll dine,
And treat our sweethearts well with wine,
And play the jig of Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!"

Now the fight had scarce begun
When they flew from their guns,
Which at first they thought to work,
So neat and handy, oh.
Captain Broke he waved his sword,
Saying, "My British lads, go 'board,
And we'll stop them playing
Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!"

When the British heard the word,
They quickly jumped on board,
To pull down the Yankees' colors
Neat and handy, oh.
Notwithstanding all their brags,
See the glorious British flag
At the Yankees' mizzen peak
Was quite the dandy, oh!

Here's to Broke and all his crew,
With courage stout and true,

That worked the *Shannon* frigate
Neat and handy, oh.
And may they ever prove,
Both in fighting or in love,
British tars, they will allow,
They're quite the dandy, oh!

"Brave Broke" is probably the British answer to the following American ballad on the capture of the *Guerriere,* as Capt. Broke's gallant deed was the answer to that disaster:

The *Guerriere,* a frigate bold,
On the foaming ocean rolled,
Commanded by proud Dacres, the grandee-O,
With as choice a British crew
As ever rammers drew
They could whip the tars of France so neat and handy-O.

When our frigate hove in view
Said proud Dacres to his crew
"Now clear your ship for action and be handy-O,
The weather gage boys get her,"
And to make his men fight better
He gave them to drink gunpowder mixed with brandy-O.

Oh, the British fire flew hot
But the Yankees answered not
Till they got within the distance they called handy-O.
The first broadside they lowered
Brought his mainmast by the board
Which made the royal frigate look abandoned-O.

Our second told so well
That his fore and mizzen fell
Which dowsed the royal ensign so handy-O.
"By Jove," said he. "we're done."
And he fired a lee gun
While the Yankees struck up "Yankee Doodle Dandy-O."

When proud Dacres came on board
To deliver up his sword
Most loath was he to part with it so handy-O.
"Oh, keep it," said brave Hull,
"For fighting makes it dull,
"Just cheer up and take a little glass of brandy-O."

Now fill your glasses full
And we'll drink to Captain Hull
And we'll pass about so merrily the brandy-O.
Let John Bull toast his fill
And the world say what it will
But for fighting the Yankees are the dandies-O.



THE ROYAL STANDARD CAPTURED AT YORK, UPPER CANADA, 1813,
AS IT IS TO-DAY

II

The Only Royal Standard in Captivity

O STRANGER, look with reverence! O British-born, bow your head in piety, then hold it high in pride, if you know the story of each British flag shown in such a collection of battle trophies as that in the United States Naval Academy, at Annapolis, Maryland. Here hang, as inspiration to the youth of succeeding naval generations, ensigns, pennants and banners won by American sailors and marines from Tripolitan pirates, Korean patriots, Confederate rebels, the land forces of Mexico and the navies of England, France and Spain.

Some are so bright as to encourage the belief that they had never been out of the flag locker before the day when the victors took possession of the foreign custom house to which they may have belonged. Others are so fragile, so faded, that the beholder fears to breathe even upon the glass which covers them lest they vanish with the vanishing vapor.

For us the captive British flags may be the emblems of disaster, but never once of disgrace; of defeat, but not in one instance of dishonor.

Brave men of our blood shed their own blood under those faded fragments of bunting when the nineteenth century was in its teens, that we might live under the Union Jack to-day. Brave British hearts yielded their uttermost drop gladly under these emblems that all things British might not die.

Some of these tattered Jacks and ensigns were torn from the mast-heads to which they had been nailed. Some were salvaged from the sea, after the last mast had gone by the board. Some fell into the hands of the enemy through lack of preparation, some through lack of caution; none through lack of courage. In no instance hangs British bunting in these halls of the enemy of old to the dishonor of the British race.

A circuit of the walls of Annapolis carries with it, in letters of blood and fire, the whole story of the War of 1812 at sea. It took forty skilled needlewomen ten months to rescue and stitch together the disintegrating bits of bunting which make up the United States collection of naval trophies. Somewhat similar is the writer's aim, however clumsy his execution, however drab the background upon which he fastens the facts he has been able to glean.

IT does not matter in what order the Annapolis collection is viewed. As a child of Toronto the writer began with the Royal Standard captured at York.

On the morning of the 27th of April, 1813, this Royal Standard snapped and flamed from its tall pine pole in the Town of York, Upper Canada, the present city of Toronto, capital of the Province of Ontario. The same breeze which flung its folds abroad, blew out the Stars and Stripes above the bellying sails of Commodore Chauncey's squadron as they came steering around Gibraltar Point and into Humber Bay, all the way from Sackett's Harbor.

Where flew the Royal Standard? Parliament Street, Toronto, faded and dingy, points the way. At its foot, near the marsh, on the site now covered with gasometers and coke ovens, stood in 1813 the Parliament

House of Upper Canada. The letter of Commodore Chauncey, who sent the captured flag to the Secretary of the Navy, indicates that it was from the Parliament Buildings, and not from the Governor's House in the Fort two miles west, that the Standard was taken.

And where did the hostile Stars and Stripes first wave over Toronto's soil? At Sunnyside, two miles still further west from the Fort, the landing was. The exact spot was about under the trestlework of the steel bridge which now corkscrews across the railway tracks and on to the Lake Shore road. Here we fought them for hours, from early morning—a handful of British troops and Canadian sharpshooters with forty Indians, and their noble nameless chief. He it was who held the top of a tall pine, like an eagle in his eyrie, till his last bullet was gone, and he dropped, a corpse, to be scalped by the white wolves below him.

The western slopes of South Parkdale, covered now with stores and apartment houses, were thinly strewn that day with the bodies of red-coated British Grenadiers, Glengarry Fencibles, Royal Newfoundlanders, men of the 8th King's and 49th Regiment, who had charged and charged again into the unending procession of advancing foes. Two thousand four hundred soldiers and sailors those sixteen ships of Commodore Chauncey disgorged on Sunnyside Beach. Six hundred and eighty-three were all our men. And the cannon we had to oppose the hundred guns of the fleet were five; two of them old French guns from the Fort of 1749, another an 18-pounder cannon barrel clamped with iron hoops to pine logs in lieu of trunnions. Yet it was afternoon before the long lines of green and blue succeeded in forcing back the redcoats over the two

miles that lay between the landing place and the "Garrison," as the stockaded fort, with its timber blockhouses with overhanging stories loopholed for musketry, was frequently called.

The Old Fort, at the foot of Bathurst Street, that was; now dedicated to the smells of slaughtered pigs, the smoke of railway trains, the passage of Exhibition-bound street cars two weeks in the year, or the whirr of automobiles making a cut-off from the congestion of the traffic on the crowded streets of the factory district. One of the old blockhouses of 1813 is standing there yet, with bullets in its log walls.

Eight hours the battle raged. By three o'clock it was seen that we could not hold the fort, nor the town. All that remained to be done was to save the troops and prevent the new ship on the stocks falling into the hands of the enemy. So the ship of war, the *Sir Isaac Brock,* lying ready for launching at what would be the foot of Lorne Street, was set on fire, and Gen. Sheaffe's regulars marched with drums beating and colors flying for Kingston, to fight another day.

The militia, having fought all day on empty stomachs, gathered in the hollow in the Government House grounds, where the Canadian Pacific freight yards now adorn Simcoe Street. Some were for re-forming and trying another bout with the foe; but the tramp, tramp, tramp of the departing regulars and the heaven-splitting crash of the explosion of the garrison powder magazine decided them. There was no longer any fort to hold!

Of the 683 defenders, 60 of the regulars were killed and 76 wounded. Forty-three of these, left behind in the retreat, were taken prisoners. Fifty of their broth-

ers in blood, the 3rd York and embodied militia, were killed and wounded. But they sold their lives dearly. The Americans lost 320 men.

"WATCH the flag, girlie; if it comes down run in—the Americans have won the day."

With these words Mrs. Grant Powell, wife of the third son of Chief Justice Powell, left her little six-year-old daughter with Bishop Strachan's son, James, to gather chips to keep the kettles boiling and the bake ovens going that morning.

The children worked in the centre of what is now the Metropolitan Church square, and the flag they watched must have been the Royal Standard on the building at the foot of Parliament Street, for nearly two miles of woods intervened between them and the fighting at the Old Fort at the foot of Bathurst Street. The flag that flew there they could not see.

The lady who carried this recollection of the War of 1812 for nearly ninety years was Mrs. Charles Seymour, of Ottawa. In 1894 she was the only person living who remembered the York or Toronto of that time. She was Dr. Grant Powell's eldest child. They came to York from Montreal in batteaux in 1811.

Mrs. Seymour used to tell of how her parents planned a gala day to begin early and last long; but the guests were slow to arrive. Two or three ladies came, but no gentlemen, and they waited in uncomfortable suspense. Then her father burst in with the news that the American fleet had been sighted. He told her mother to take her and her nurse to Mrs. McGill's cottage in the present Metropolitan square, and to help prepare food, for the militia had been called and were without provisions.

All the ladies at Mrs. McGill's were busy baking bread and cooking meals, and the children instead of going to the "long wooden house, painted blue," where Mrs. Goodman kept school on George Street, were employed in gathering chips for fuel while the rumble of cannonading and rattle of musketry rose nearer and nearer on the gusty April air.

The flag watched so anxiously at last came down.

Next morning the Powells returned to their own house. The elaborate supper table which the little girl had left behind so longingly was a wreck. The house had been ransacked. A six-foot Yankee lounged in the door, breaking pieces off a cone of loaf sugar. Loaf sugar, my dears, came in great mounds then, not in the tiny cubes of our day.

"How dare you steal Mrs. Powell's sugar?" was the practical question of Bessy Walters, the unappalled nurse. "I wish you'd go home and mind your own business!"

"Guess I wish I could," sighed the sentry.

"Where is your home?" asked Mrs. Powell.

"Down to Stillwater, New York. I've one of Major Bleecker's farms."

Now, Dr. Powell had first met Mrs. Powell near Stillwater, when he was practising medicine in New York State; and Major Bleecker was Mrs. Powell's father!

The barracks and blockhouses and Governor's House in the fort were burned. Dearborn, the American commander, was so enraged at the escape of the troops and destruction of the *Sir Isaac Brock*—the Americans had brought caulkers all the way from Sackett's Harbor to complete her for launching—that

he threatened to burn all the town. John Strachan, Anglican Bishop of Toronto, bullied him out of the inhumane idea. But the Parliament Buildings were set on fire and destroyed.

The Americans remained in possession till the 8th of May, when they sailed for Niagara.

AMONG the trophy flags at Annapolis, the Royal Standard captured at York has prominent place. It hangs in a corridor in a hall of marble and granite dedicated to the greatest naval writer of our time, Admiral A. T. Mahan; a hall with a splendid auditorium, wherein the Annapolis midshipmen assemble amid the battle trophies of a century and a half, to view moving pictures of the battle of Jutland.

The Royal Standard is displayed in a great glass-covered panel ten feet long and twelve feet high. Yet large as is the case, the ancient banner is folded and cramped until it looks like a patchwork quilt. It is a quite huge flag, measuring 24 feet by 30 feet. Spread out, it covers a space larger than the ground floor of many modern dwellings. It was woven in the times when the House of Hanover was more than a memory. In the faded folds are the golden lions of England, above and below, on ground that has been red; the red lion of Scotland, rearing in his yellow field, and the gold harp of Ireland on its blue square.

These are the same as in the Royal Standard of to-day, although the yellows have faded to a vague sand tone, and the reds to a misty buff. Only the blue has held. But in the centre, where the quarters meet, are designs never seen now; a crown, a blue lion, a white horse, and two red lions, all capped by the Electoral bonnet of Hanover. These were the arms of the reigning house.

The flag has so suffered from the passage of years that, by itself, it would fall to pieces. It has been most skilfully preserved by sewing down the surviving shreds and threads on a background of neutral-tinted linen. The remainder of the flag is thus retained in a network of fine stitches. It is estimated that between 700,000 and 800,000 of these are required to hold it. Where the network crosses the original material threads carefully dyed to the exact shade of the surviving colors are used—faded red for the faded red, yellowed white for



THE *DUKE OF GLOUCESTER'S* JACK.

the yellowed white, and so on. The blue dye used has held its color best, and the parts of the bunting dyed blue are the least decayed.

ONE prize only did the Americans make in Toronto harbor, the dismantled brig, *Duke of Gloucester*. She was a hulk, her war guns already transferred to the *Prince Regent,* which had left the harbor the week before. We set her on fire when the *Sir Isaac Brock* was destroyed. But the Americans patched her up and took her back to Sackett's Harbor,



THE MACE TAKEN FROM THE BURNED PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS OF UPPER CANADA, 1813, NOW AT ANNAPOLIS.

where they in turn set her on fire when we attacked that place.

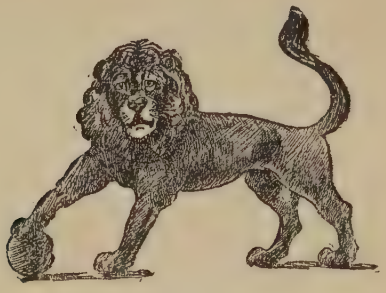
Her flag is at Annapolis, too—a British Union Jack, somewhat decayed and torn, but brighter in color than the Royal Standard, because it has been less exposed to the light. The flag measures six feet in width and eleven feet six inches in length.

Professor Sidney Gunn, the scholarly curator of the Academy Museum, exhumed the *Gloucester's* jack from the locker in which it is stowed along with many other flags, all carefully bagged, tagged and numbered, and allowed the writer to spread out and handle the bunting stitched together into crosses of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, by the old palm-and-needle artists of one hundred and more years ago.

It is impossible to touch their handiwork without feeling a great reverence for and a great sympathy with those pig-tailed tars of Nelson's time, who came to the wilderness of North America to practise their craft in the Provincial Marine, far from the sounding sea which severed them from home. The *Gloucester's* jack was possibly stitched by the light of horn lanterns in some cramped 'tween-decks or colonial sail-loft, while the hard-fingered seamster whistled "Spanish Ladies" or yarned of Copenhagen or Trafalgar. To see these ancient flags is a treasured experience; to feel them with one's fingers a great privilege.

UP flights of marble stairs and past corridors of polished stone in Mahan Hall at the Academy is the office of Mr. Brown, the Academy's librarian. In a sanctum within the sanctum is a small cupboard, and from this Mr. Brown produced a small light wooden staff, turned and gilded and capped by a metal crown; the whole thing four feet eight inches long.

This is the mace which lay on the Speaker's table in the first Parliament House in York—the building at the foot of Parliament Street, which the Americans burned. Mr. Brown courteously allowed his visitor to handle the treasured relic; it is the only war trophy of its kind the United States possesses. It is in an excellent state of preservation; but in its gilded splendor less eloquent of the aspirations, hopes, fears and heroism of the people of a hundred and some years ago



THE CAPTURED LION FROM THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR.

From a drawing made by Mr. S. G. Curry, Toronto, for the late John Ross Robertson, during a visit to Annapolis, and published in Mr. Robertson's monumental work "Landmarks of Toronto."

than the faded flags whose shreds and tatters adorn the adjoining walls.

Other relics of York carried away by the American

invaders were a small wooden lion, which either stood in front of the Speaker's chair or formed part of the armorial carvings above it: and—a human scalp!

The wooden lion is in another of the halls of Annapolis; but Mr. Brown was unable to produce the scalp. It is mentioned specifically in Commodore Chauncey's letter as having hung over the mace in the Parliament House. How it came there has been the subject of many guesses. One explanation is that an officer received it in a letter from a friend on the frontier and tossed it into a drawer, where it was found when the building was sacked. Another is that it was not a scalp at all, but the Speaker's bag-wig, worn only by that worthy when the House was in session. Still another story ascribes the burning of the building to the horror of the victors at finding such an emblem of destruction. Americans had a wholesome dread of the scalping knives of Britain's Indian allies. At any rate, the article has disappeared.

These trophies from Toronto are worthy of remembrance. The fame of the faded flags of York may be known only to a few; the heroism and sacrifice displayed in their defence was, perhaps, no greater than the heroism and sacrifice displayed in the defence of other flags which hang in the captors' halls, and whose stories follow; but the seed sown under those old flags in blood and tears has borne noble fruit.

There was a Jarvis of Toronto in the Battle of York, in April, 1813; there was a Jarvis of Toronto in the Battle of St. Julien, in April, 1915. Thanks to the gallant sacrifices of the Battle of York, British tradition did not perish from the soil of Canada. Had the handful of British regulars and York militia yielded the town and the ship on April 27, 1813, as readily as they

gave up their own lives when out-numbered four to one and out-gunned twenty to one, Chauncey would have had command of the lake, Dearborn would have had command of the shore, Kingston would have fallen in a fortnight, and Upper Canada would have become American territory—with Toronto to-day an obscure town known as Chaunceyville or Pikesburg in a star-spangled annex of the State of New York.

III.

The Union Jack on Capitol Hill

DESPITE slaughter and burnings the American invasions of Canada in 1812 and 1813 failed. On the 7th of June, 1814, the Cabinet of the United States met in Washington and initiated yet another invasion of Canada. Britain answered that menace by burning the roof of the United States capital over the heads of the United States Cabinet, on the 24th of the following August.

Such, in short, is the explanation of the British capture of Washington; nor is that event recalled now for the purpose of reviving an ancient grudge or glorying over the humiliation of the United States a century since.

If the Royal Standard from the old Parliament House in Toronto has hung in captivity in American halls since 1813, it may soothe our pride to remember that in the year following the capital of the United States was at the mercy of the British invader; and did not find such mercy cruel.

There are obvious and salutary lessons for us and for America in the story of the capture of Washington; lessons which might profitably be made as much a part of the curriculum in America schools as their daily flag-worship. Indeed the anthem of the Star-Spangled Banner, which brings Americans to their more or less prompt feet whenever and wherever it is played, had its birth on the further slopes of this very valley of affliction for the American nation.

We show no flags in commemoration of the capture of the capital of a former foe. We have been friends with that foe so long that if we had preserved the physical evidences of triumph we would be inclined to cover them up, lest they give offence.

Only a grave in Halifax and two hyphens in an Irish family name remain to remind us of how quickly and how hard Britain hit in the days of old when Canada was in danger. The grave is the resting place of Maj.-Gen. Robert Ross; and the hyphens appear, by royal warrant, in the name Ross-of-Bladensburg which his descendants bear.

Ross came from Wellington's wars in the Spanish Peninsula, and brought Wellington's men with him; not many, but sufficient for the purpose. They had embarked at Bordeaux, and were reinforced in Bermuda. There were thirty-four hundred of them.

The attack on the capital of the United States was as much the task of the navy as of the army, and Chesapeake Bay was filled with the white wings of line-of-battle-ships, frigates, sloops, brigs, schooners and bomb-vessels. Rear-Admiral George Cockburn had already blockaded the bay for a twelve-month. The fierce temper of Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, who now assumed supreme command, is reflected in a letter of Sir Edward Codrington, his chief of staff.

"President Madison," wrote Codrington, "by letting his generals burn villages in Canada, has been trying to excite terror, but . . . the terror and suffering will probably be brought home to the doors of his fellow-citizens. I am fully convinced that this is the true way to end this Yankee war."

Major-General Ross and Rear-Admiral Cockburn fitted one another like a pair of scissor blades. The sailor had often been on American soil during his long blockade of Chesapeake Bay, and as soon as Ross arrived he took him ashore with him. The soldier could not but admire the admiral's land tactics. The country was thickly wooded and deeply scored with ravines. Opportunities for ambush were excellent. Wherever Cockburn went for a "walk" he flung out two parties of marines, one on either side of his course, scouring the woods in open order; and each marine carried a bugle.

Cockburn's conduct in general ashore in his long sojourn on the American coast, is worthy of note. He had a "system" which he imparted to all Americans with whom he came in contact. This was, to land without offering molestation of any kind to unopposing inhabitants; to seize and destroy all articles of merchandise or munitions of war; to pay full market price for whatever cattle or supplies he took for the fleet. Wherever he met armed resistance he treated the place as a fortified post and all its male inhabitants as soldiers, liable to capture.

In one of the coast raids, at Havre de Grace, on May 3, 1813, a battery opposed the landing of the British marines. After it was silenced Lieutenant Westphal, of the British navy, went forward bearing a flag of truce, to arrange terms of surrender. Some patriot fired on him from ambush, and the shot went through the very hand which bore the white flag. With his remaining hand Lieutenant Westphal seized a Yankee captain of militia and held him as hostage. The seamen and marines spread through the village and began

to carry household goods to their boats. Women followed them clamorously bewailing their losses. Lieutenant Westphal ordered all their goods to be restored to them, and saw to it that not one occupied building was burned. But he was just as scrupulous about seeing that each of the six guns of the silenced battery was embarked and carried off to the ship.

During the first ramble with Ross, Cockburn pointed out the ease with which the country could be penetrated and suggested an attack on Washington; a suggestion acted upon as soon as the last troopship came in from Bermuda.

Washington lies on the Potomac, upon which river the quiescence of affairs became to our parents almost as familiar a quotation as the absence of anything to report on the Western Front became to us. The Potomac enters Chesapeake Bay over the Kettle-Bottom Shoals. Twenty miles further up the Patuxent flows in. The Patuxent is navigable for small craft for forty miles as far as Pig Point, and Washington is only fifteen miles across country from there.

The United States had relied upon gun-boats for coastal defence. The assembling British fleet was scarcely conscious of the existence of the scattered sea-going navy of the United States; and the gun-boats were herded into the Patuxent and chased up that river like a flock of sheep.

These gunboats were marine curiosities. They used oars and sails. Some of them had been coasting sloops of 90 or 100 tons burden. They retained their rig, but must have looked like houseboats. Their sides were built up and heavy beams were laid across, and the whole structure, top, ends and sides, planked in,

leaving loopholes for musketry, like a blockhouse, and ports or embrasures—three to a side, through which six eighteen-pounder cannon could be fired. Sixty men could fight under the shelter of this wooden umbrella.

The gunboat squadron was commanded by a brave and experienced revolutionary veteran and privateersman, Commodore Joshua Barney, who flew his broad-pennant from a large sloop; but the best he could do with the inefficient means of defence he had was to make a burnt offering of his boats before the British got to Pig Point, and save his sailors and their guns for a junction with the land forces.

Barney was chased into the Patuxent on August 21st. Ross and his Peninsular veterans, Cockburn and his marines, had been landed at Benedict, lower down the river, on the 19th. They marched north towards Pig Point, smaller vessels from the fleet accompanying them. It looked as though the destruction of the gunboat flotilla was the objective. It was only a feint. When Barney himself completed that destruction, on August 22, the British land force—thirty-four hundred soldiers, seven hundred marines and a few sailors—flung itself across country against the American capital.

No one in the United States knew what the British plans were. A more stringent blockade of the Chesapeake? A coast raid? A demonstration in force? Or all three? No one could tell; and the British design on Washington was further obscured by the despatch of Captain James Alexander Gordon with a squadron against Alexandria, on the same river; while another expedition under Sir Peter Parker in the frigate *Menelaus* went up the Chesapeake river above Baltimore.

Brigadier-General Winder, recently exchanged after being captured by Vincent's bold strategy at Stoney Creek, on the Niagara Frontier, had been assigned by the American Cabinet to the defence of the Washington and Baltimore districts. Ninety-three thousand five hundred militia were called out. Six thousand came to the defence of Washington! Four hundred sailors and one hundred and twenty marines from the burned gunboats joined them. When the enemy's hand was on the throat of the United States this was the national response in 1814! Fifteen thousand militia were supposed to fulfil Winder's requirements, but both he and Mr. Armstrong, Secretary of War, knew better. It was a foregone conclusion, before the battle of Bladensburg was fought, that the militia would be beaten by regulars.

The British march on Washington was through a thickly populated country, "covered with wood" to quote the American Secretary of War, "and offering at every step strong positions of defence." Yet it was at noon on August 24, just beyond the village of Bladensburg, and within five miles of Washington itself, that the invaders met their first and only resistance.

One can trace the field of battle plainly yet. The eastern branch of the Potomac runs through Bladensburg. Wellington's veterans rushed the bridge in spite of the sweep of American cannon balls and bullets from a fortified house and the hills above the stream. A battery on a hilltop commanded the bridge, with one line of infantry on either side of it and a second line behind it. Beyond the bridge the broad turnpike leads to Washington. Along this the British rushed. They were halted for a moment by an eighteen-pounder and

three twelves, hurried to the gap by the valiant Commodore Barney. They swung around him and his battery, plumped a few rockets over the heads of the militia on the crest supporting him, and put them to flight.

The others, on the left, had already run. Barney and his men fought well. The old privateersman fed his own guns and worked till he dripped with perspiration that blazing August day.

You may still see, on the left hand side of the turnpike running in from Bladensburg to Washington, a broken-down well before you come to the tragic tangle of undergrowth where Decatur was killed in a duel. At this well Barney was stooping to drink when a British bullet struck him in the leg. His ammunition was done, the wagon drivers had fled in panic, two of his officers were killed and two wounded.

"Save yourselves while you can," he told the survivors, "and leave me here!"

The charging British grenadiers who found the old man sitting beside the muddied well threw up their bayonets. They brought Major-General Ross and Rear-Admiral Cockburn to him; and both British officers greeted him "with marked respect and politeness," and in the words of the commodore himself, treated him "like a brother."

President Madison had ridden out from Washington that morning to review the troops posted to meet the British advance. By virtue of his office he was their commander-in-chief, and by virtue of his experience in the revolutionary war he joined with Secretary of State Monroe and Secretary of War Armstrong in the guesses of the cabinet at the British intentions.

On the morning of the battle his "martial appearance gladdened every countenance and encouraged every heart;" but with the first bang of a British gun he exclaimed: "Come, General Armstrong! Come, Colonel Monroe! Let us go and leave it to the commanding general!" And to plagiarize the title of Mr. Norman Douglas' recent novel, "They Went." President Madison abandoned the White House and fled to Brockville, in Maryland, with his Attorney-General. Messrs. Armstrong and Monroe sought refuge at Frederick, in Maryland; and Louden County, Virginia, sheltered the Secretary of the Navy.

So rapidly did the defenders abandon their positions that not more than fifteen hundred of the British troops had time to become engaged. The total British casualties were sixty-five killed and one hundred and ninety-one wounded; not much more than the losses in a severe naval engagement, but materially exceeding the casualties of the embattled defenders. Twenty-six Americans laid down their lives in defence of Washington and fifty-one were wounded. The surviving seven thousand fled so fast that only one hundred and twenty prisoners were taken.

For the defence of the obscure village of York, on Lake Ontario, the year before, one hundred and eighty-six of the six hundred and eighty-three English and Canadian defenders shed their blood, and over one hundred of these gave their lives.

On to Washington swept the British troops when the heat of the day was over. Near the Capitol, on the outskirts of the city, they halted, and General Ross, Rear-Admiral Cockburn and other officers, accompanied by a small guard, went forward.

As they advanced in the twilight there were flashes of musketry from the Capitol and from two dwelling houses which stood near by. General Ross' horse was shot under him, one of the guard was killed and three others wounded. Cockburn galloped back, brought up the light companies of the advanced detachment, surrounded the houses, took the occupants out and set fire to the houses and to the Capitol itself.

The home of the United States Congress was completely burned. A small circular screen of stone pillars, suggesting a light-well or air shaft, in the heart of the present magnificent Capitol at Washington, is the surviving remnant of that earlier Capitol where was initiated the invasion of Canada, the country which, it was boasted, "could be taken without soldiers."

As the flames crowned the Capitol dome the crash of explosions in the distance announced the activity of self-destruction. The Americans had set fire to the frigate *Boston* and to the newly-built 1,600-ton frigate *Columbia,* the largest ship they had attempted, and the sloop-of-war *Argus,* which had just been completed at the Navy Yard in replacement of that earlier *Argus* captured by the British brig *Pelican.* The *Columbia,* indeed, had been re-named *Essex* just a few days before, in compliment to Capt. David Porter, whose valiant defence of the earlier *Essex* at Valparaiso had earned him the command of this new frigate, upon his being paroled and exchanged. The Americans blew up their powder magazine and destroyed a vast accumulation of stores; for, besides being the seat of government, Washington was one of the great military and naval centres of the United States.

A British party had been sent to destroy the fort

at Greenleaf's Point. Powder concealed in a well there blew up, killing twelve British officers and men and injuring thirty. At half past ten, in no particularly amiable mood, the conquerors rode down from Capitol Hill to the Executive Mansion or "President's Palace," in Washington. The building was not then known, it appears, as the White House. President Madison and his family had fled, and the place was empty. On being told that a guard and two cannon had been withdrawn from it only a few minutes before Rear-Admiral Cockburn condemned it to be burned. It was set on fire, but the destruction was not complete; and local tradition has it that the whitewashing of the building, after the British evacuation of Washington, in order to efface the traces of smoke and fire, gave rise to the name White House which President Roosevelt afterwards popularized.

After setting the White House ablaze the British burned the treasury and war offices, and were about to set fire to the building in which the "National Intelligencer," the Government newspaper, was printed. Citizens pleaded with Rear-Admiral Cockburn, pointing out that the burning of this building would inevitably destroy the private houses beside it.

"Very well," said the sailor, "it shall be spared. Private property and private persons shall be respected. Good night." And off he swung to his quarters on Capitol Hill.

There were no scenes of rapine and pillage. One British sentry, left on guard in front of the "National Intelligencer," held Washington that night; and if American citizens were unable to sleep for terror their fears were groundless. Early next morning the terrible

Cockburn strolled about the city with an escort of three soldiers only. Government property was painstakingly destroyed, for this was a punitive expedition. Gallatin, the American Secretary of the Treasury, accurately sensed the national British temper when he wrote: "To use their own language, they mean to inflict on America a chastisement which will teach her that war is not to be declared against Great Britain with impunity."

On the following day the office of the fugitive Secretary of State was burnt, the type and printing materials of the Government paper were destroyed, the great bridge across the Potomac was wrecked, the Government ropewalks and the surviving stores and buildings in the Navy Yard were given to the flames, and more than two hundred cannon were blown up. The Government property destroyed was valued at $1,624,280; but, as a contemporary American newspaper said: "The British officers pay inviolable respect to private property, and no peacable citizen is molested."

There was a godly iron founder in Washington who had cast cannon-balls and guns for the service of his country; and in his distress he vowed a vow unto the Lord, promising that if his life was spared and his foundry escaped destruction he would build a church. His prayer was heard; and to this day Foundry Memorial Church in Washington commemorates his pledge.

At eight o'clock on the evening of the 25th of August, just twenty-four hours after their advance guard had halted in the shadow of the Capitol, the British army and navy marched out of Washington.

They went back by way of Bladensburg and took with them one coach, several gigs, twelve wagons, thirty or forty horses and sixty or seventy cattle. This was for the convenience of their wounded. Marching leisurely across the country, with never a musket fired to disturb their progress, they regained Benedict, fifty miles from Washington, on the 29th, and the following day were off to sea again!

A SIDE trip to Alexandria is always part of the sight-seeing tours to Washington in our time. It was not neglected when Messrs. Ross and Cockburn conducted their excursion a hundred and some years ago.

The Potomac River, by which both Washington and Alexandria can be reached, has enough turns now to break a snake's back. In 1814 it had enough bars and flats to break an adding machine, if such had existed. Steamers traverse the buoyed channel now with the help of pilots and beacons. British sailing vessels attacked and conquered the same or worse difficulties of navigation in 1814 with nothing to help them but muscle and the leadline, "a navigation which no ship of a similar draught of water had ever passed with her guns and stores on board."

The British frigates *Seahorse* and *Euryalus,* with the bomb-ships *Devastation, Aetna* and *Meteor,* a rocket-thrower called the *Erebus,* and one despatch-boat, began the ascent of the river on August 17. They got aground 20 times in 10 days. They got afloat again twenty times by shifting their guns from one to another, running out kedges, and warping off by backbreaking heaving at the capstans. In a squall on the flats off Maryland Point the *Euryalus* had the heads of her

three topmasts wrung off and her foremast and bowsprit sprung; and the *Seahorse,* Capt. Gordon's flagship, sprung her mizzenmast. In the heart of the enemy's country they made repairs, from the spars they had brought all the way from England, with as little disturbance as though they were lying in Portsmouth or Plymouth Sound.

The last fifty miles they had to pull themselves from one kedge anchor to another the whole way. This took five days. On the night of the 27th of August the bomb-ships blew the defenders out of Fort Washington with their first shell. In the morning the British destroyed 27 cannon the Americans had left behind them, and began to buoy the last few miles of channel to Alexandria.

The proportion of the 93,500 defenders of Columbia responsible for Alexandria was never heard from. The municipal council sent out a flag of truce, and offered to capitulate, but displayed no unseemly haste over the completion of the details.

The shrewd Alexandrians were employing the interval in unloading the shipping which had fled up the river before the advancing squadron. They concealed the cargoes and sank the vessels in shallow water, taking their masts out so that they would not show.

Capt. Gordon was also in no haste until he had the channel buoyed and a line of frigates and bomb-throwers ready to enforce his conditions. He then put the city to ransom on these terms:

No burning, no looting, no violence.

All shipping to be surrendered.

All sunken vessels to be raised, repaired, loaded

and completely equipped at the expense of their owners.

All merchandise removed to be returned at once and stowed on board.

Three days later the *Seahorse* was kedging back down the Potomac with twenty-one shiploads of flour, cotton, tobacco, sugar and other goods following her. The British fleet towed away three American ships, three brigs and fifteen sloops and schooners, which had been unloaded, unrigged, sunk, then raised, caulked, re-rigged and re-loaded all in 72 hours by wry-faced owners who now looked their last on nearly a million dollars' worth of property.

The most amazing part of Capt. Gordon's exploit was his return. Only one hostile incident marked the British occupation of Alexandria. Two American naval men, said to be Capt. David Porter, who had just lost a second *Essex,* and Master Commandant John Orde Creighton, attempted to kidnap a little midshipman of the *Euryalus,* John Went Fraser. The lad's shirt collar tore, and he broke from their clutches as they were galloping off with him. His boat's crew, concealed under a bank, put the kidnappers to rout.

The British brig *Fairy* had fought her way up the river past a battery of five guns, and brought Admiral Cochrane's orders to Capt. Gordon to return on August 31. The Americans took heart on seeing the backs of their unwelcome visitors, and when the bomb-ship *Devastation* grounded they tried to destroy her with a fleet of fire-ships. Commodore Rodgers came from Philadelphia with picked seamen from the newly-built and blockaded U.S.S. *Guerriere.* Commodore Porter, of the Pacific exploits, and Commodore Perry, the

victor of Lake Erie, joined him, as did a party of officers and men from the blockaded *Constellation,* which had been growing grass on her keel at Norfolk for a year.

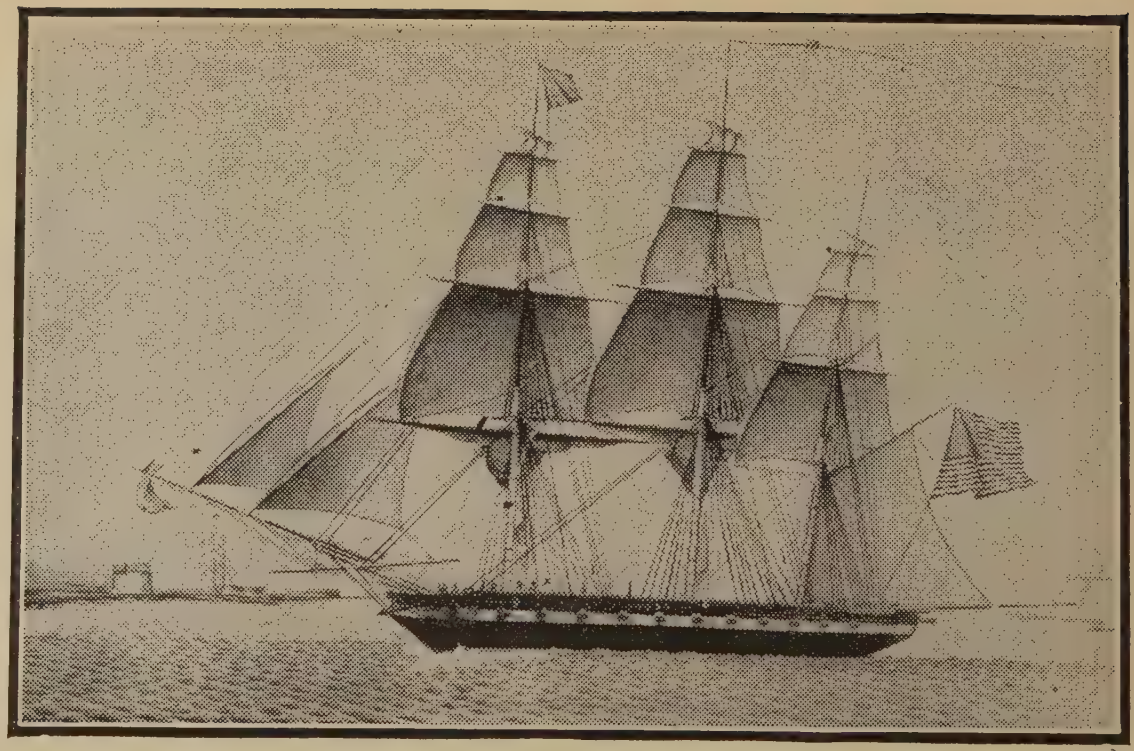
"It is impossible," said an American newspaper, with that same mutilation of the English language which American newspapers practise to-day, "the ships can pass such formidable batteries, commanded by our naval heroes, and manned by our invincible seamen. We'll teach them how to draw up terms of capitulation."

But although Commodore Rodgers himself commanded five boats which attacked the grounded *Devastation,* the attempt to destroy her failed. Capt. Gordon pushed off with his own ship's boats and routed the commodore; and Midshipman John Moore, of the *Seahorse,* and other heroes, towed the fire-ships on shore.

The Americans, however, built a battery of eleven guns at a point below the grounded vessel and again tried to burn her. The fleet fought their way through, the frigates anchoring and bombarding the battery while the twenty-one prizes passed, and the bomb-ships covering the departure of the frigates in turn. The *Devastation* was floated and got safely through with the others.

Below this again the Americans had two batteries of eight or nine guns each, studded along a mile of cliffs under which the ships had to pass. Here the rocket-ship *Erebus* took the ground. The frigates turned back, pounded the American batteries into silence, and got her off.

On the 9th of September the *Seahorse* sailed out of



U.S. Sloop-of-war *Ontario,* one of the armed vessels which escaped destruction at Baltimore when the place was attacked in 1814. The *Ontario* was then newly built. It is noteworthy that in the portrait of her, painted in 1822, there are fourteen red and thirteen white stripes shown in the American flag. The picture of the *Ontario* is typical of the best sloops-of-war of her period, like the *Wasp,* American *Peacock,* and *Hornet,* whose names frequently appear in these pages. The *Ontario* was a ship-sloop. The brig-sloops like the American *Enterprise* or *Syren,* or the British *Frolic, Peacock, Boxer, Penguin, Epervier,* etc., were smaller and inferior vessels.

the Potomac and anchored in salt water in Chesapeake Bay again, after twenty-three days of inland voyaging. She brought with her all her consorts and her 21 prizes. The total British loss in this expedition was seven men killed and 35 wounded.

LESS auspicious were the attacks on Baltimore. Sir Peter Parker made a midnight landing from his anchorage off Moorsfields, on the 30th of August, to attack two hundred Maryland volunteers. He apparently did not practise Cockburn's precaution of the bugle scouts; for he was ambushed in the woods and slain, with fourteen of his men; but his sailors carried away his body and 24 of their 27 wounded.

Baltimore was strongly fortified, and the American troops and militia which had failed to save Washington and Alexandria rallied there. It was Sept. 12th before the British forces, the army and navy again working together, made an attack on the city. Major-General Ross and Rear-Admiral Cockburn went ahead, with a guard of 60 men, to reconnoitre. In a thick wood, eight miles from the city, they came upon an American division of 370 men. There was a skirmish and the Americans ran.

"I shall go back, Cockburn, and order up the light companies, as we seem to be getting to close grips with them," said Ross.

Cockburn nodded and disposed the remainder of the little troop of sixty so as to hold the ground gained. The firing had ceased. But at some interval there was a single shot, and then complete silence.

The light companies had pushed forward at the sound of the first musketry; and as they advanced they discovered Major-General Ross lying dead in the road,

a bullet hole through his right arm and a musket ball in his breast.

Col. Brooke, of the 44th Regiment, succeeded to the command of the 3,270 red coats, black men and blue-jackets who comprised the British force. He led them on two miles till they came upon the American advanced guard of 4,500 men. A volley and the American line broke, leaving guns and wounded behind. Some rallied in a wood. They were driven out by British bayonets, and the invaders closed in to within two miles of the city.

It was decided to storm the place on the night of the 13th. The frigates, bombs and rocket-ship *Erebus* had moved up to positions from which they could bombard Fort McHenry, the Star Fort and the water batteries on both sides of the entrance to the harbor. They bombarded all day, and the forts bombarded back, the satisfaction being mutual and the damage consisting of one 24-pounder in Fort McHenry being dismounted and two of the bomb-vessels being hit. Night came, with heavy rain; and the red glare of the rockets and flashes of the great guns rent the raindrops and the darkness—and little else. Vice-Admiral Cochrane notified Col. Brooke that a barrier of vessels, sunk across the mouth of Baltimore Harbor, made it impossible for the fleet to co-operate closely in the army's attack upon the city and entrenched camp. The commanders agreed that the capture of the city would not be sufficient recompense for the loss involved in storming the fortifications. Not to mince matters, they were foiled.

At half past one on the morning of the 14th the troops commenced to withdraw from their positions

nearest Baltimore. They were all re-embarked by next day without the loss of a man. Indeed, after the skirmish of the 12th of September, in which our losses were 46 killed and 273 wounded—principally by American buckshot—the only British casualties were four men killed and twenty-four wounded in the bombarding vessels. The American loss was 24 killed, 129 wounded and 200 prisoners.

As the night of Sept. 13 settled down, Francis Scott Key, district attorney of Washington, who was detained on one of the British ships as a guest rather than a prisoner, saw the American flag waving over the ramparts of Fort McHenry. It was this which inspired his outburst the following day:

> Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
> What so proudly we hailed by the twilight's last gleaming.

The tune was British ("Anacreon in Heaven") but words and air were immediately popular and have become the national anthem of the United States.

The departing Admiral Cochrane steered for Halifax, where preparations were being made for the attack on New Orleans. He took with him the body of Major-General Ross; and on a flat tombstone in St. Paul's Cemetery, Halifax, may still be deciphered the inscription:

"Here on the 29th of September, 1814, was committed to the earth the body of Major-General Robert Ross, who, after having distinguished himself in all ranks as an officer in Egypt, Italy, Portugal, Spain, France and America, was killed at the commencement of an action which terminated in the defeat and rout of the troops of the United States, near Baltimore, on the 13th of September, 1814."

"At Rosstrevor, the seat of his family in Ireland, a monument more worthy of his memory has been erected by the noblemen and gentlemen of his county, and the officers of a grateful army, who under his conduct attacked and dispersed the Americans at Bladensburg on the 24th of August, 1814, and the same day victoriously entered Washington, the capital of the United States.

"In St. Paul's Cathedral a monument has also been erected to his memory by his country."

The Ross family, of Rosstrevor House, County Down, Ireland, has, by royal warrant, borne the name Ross-of-Bladensburg since 1814.

There was some heart-burning over the result at Baltimore. The navy men were disappointed. The captains of the *Severn, Euryalus, Havannah* and *Hebrus,* volunteered to lighten their ships and lay them alongside Fort McHenry. They were anxious to get at the just-completed American frigates *Java, Erie* and *Ontario,* lying inside the harbor; and they might have done so. If conquest had been Britain's object the failure to take Baltimore would have been a serious disappointment. Conquest was not Britain's object, and the repulse at Baltimore was a detail, of importance only because connected with it was the death of the very able Major-General Ross. The Chesapeake campaign of 1814 was a British attack on American prestige and was completely successful in its object. That fair-minded American, Admiral A. T. Mahan, says of the battle of Bladensburg, the successful climax of the Chesapeake operations:

"It was the completion of the Administration's

disgrace, unrelieved by any feature of credit save the gallant stand of Barney's four hundred.

"The burning of Washington was the impressive culmination of the devastation to which the coast districts were everywhere exposed by the weakness of the country, while the battle of Bladensburg crowned the humiliation entailed upon the nation by the demagogic prejudices in favor of untrained patriotism, as supplying all defects for ordinary service in the field.

"In the defenders of Bladensburg was realized Jefferson's ideal of a citizen soldiery, unskilled, but strong in their love of home, flying to arms to oppose an invader; and they had every inspiring incentive to tenacity, for they, and they only, stood between the enemy and the centre and heart of national life."

We may well be proud to belong to the great English-speaking Anglo-Celtic race when we read how our ancestors acted on such occasions as the American capture of Toronto or the British capture of Washington. Here was hard fighting, but no hatred, wounds deep but not beyond healing, bloodshed, but not national bitterness.

German atrocities in Belgium, Bulgarian atrocities in Serbia, Turkish atrocities in Greece, Russian atrocities in Russia, and Irish atrocities in Ireland, may cause us to despair for civilization. But in this conflict between Britain and the United States the warring forces of both nations in general kept their banners unstained by wholesale cruelty or wanton destruction. No roof-tree ever crashed in flames but someone cursed the hand that plied the torch. There was rancor for the time, there were isolated instances of harshness and malevolence. But the War of 1812 left no scars that

festered, and Toronto and Washington are incidents of that war which emphasize the great truth that in the English-speaking race lies, humanly speaking, the hope of the world.

IV

The British *Belvidera*

IN picture, song and story Americans have preserved the record of the great running fight of their frigate *Constitution,* with a British squadron in the heroic days of 1812. It is a tradition, and a not ignoble tradition, of the American nation.

How many of British blood have ever heard of the *Belvidera's* five-to-one fight with the American squadron which fired the first shots in the war?

One hour after he received his orders following the declaration of war upon Great Britain, Commodore John Rodgers was stretching to sea in the frigate *President,* followed by the frigates *United States* and *Congress,* the ship-sloop *Hornet* and the brig-sloop *Argus.*

The non-technical reader may be puzzled by the use of the word "Sloop" in the nomenclature of the old sailing navy. A Sloop is a small one-masted sailing vessel; but a Sloop-of-war in the old navy was a ship with three masts or a brig or schooner with two, whose captain held commander's rank. It was a rating, not a rig.

The capture of the "Jamaica plate fleet"—"an idea which, if successful, would inflict a startling blow at British commerce and prestige," was in Rodgers' mind. Plate fleets had passed with the decay of Spain, but the term fired popular imagination. Rodgers was informed that a British convoy of one hundred sail had left Negril Bay, Jamaica, on May 20. War was

declared on June 18. He had hopes of snapping up this large collection of deep-laden merchantmen, sailing at the slow pace of the slowest, apprehensive only of pirates or French privateers; for in those pre-radio days they would have no means of knowing that America had joined the belligerents against Britain, except the chance encounter at sea of some vessel which had the news.

First day out the American squadron spoke a homeward-bound brig, which reported passing the "plate fleet" four days before. So when the look-outs hailed "Sail ho!" at 6 o'clock in the morning of June 23rd, 1812, and the brass telescopes revealed a small frigate to the eastward there was joy in the hunting squadron, for they felt sure this was one of the convoy patrols and that the "plate fleet" itself would be just beyond the horizon.

As a matter of fact the stranger was the British frigate *Belvidera,* commanded by Capt. Richard Byron. She knew nothing of the declaration of war except what she had learned from a New York pilot boat the day before.

The *Belvidera* was patiently hovering on the American coast, like a cat at a mousehole. She knew the French privateer *Marengo* was in New London and she waited to nab her when she should poke her bowsprit a fathom beyond the three-mile limit of the supposedly neutral waters.

The *Belvidera* was a hundred miles north and 48 miles east of Nantucket shoals when she saw the American squadron coming. Not knowing its character or intention she stood off northeast before the brisk west wind. "Be Prepared" was the motto of the best Brit-

ishers then, as it should be now. The guns were cast loose and the cartridges pricked; but the priming was not laid on.

A year before there had been a lamentable exchange of broadsides between the *President*—the headmost ship which was now pursuing—and the British sloop *Little Belt,* through the accidental discharge of a shotted gun, when these ships of two nations at peace with each other were exchanging hails. Nine British seamen were killed and twenty-three wounded in this clash. Capt. Byron took every precaution to prevent a repetition of such a tragedy, should the news of war be false, and at the same time to preserve the honor of his flag should the news be true.

Studdingsails swelling at the yard arms of the oncoming squadron further roused the wary captain's suspicions, and war flags streaming from truck and peak at 11.30, left no doubt in his mind. He hoisted his own colors and kept on his course.

The *Belvidera* was fairly fast and the stern chase was a long one. The *President,* very smart on all points of sailing, and especially off the wind, was within two miles and three-quarters at noon. The wind then fell light, prolonging the pursuit.

The *Belvidera* had twenty-six long eighteen-pounders on her main deck, and had beside two long nines and fourteen 32-pounder carronades on her quarterdeck and forecastle. Carronades, it may be explained were short light cannon throwing large balls short distances. They were so much of a novelty in 1812 that they were frequently omitted from the enumeration of a ship's "guns," although they had been in use for a decade and were popular with the Admiralty be-

cause they required fewer men to work them than the "long guns" and weighed much less. The *Belvidera's* long eighteens were her most effective guns, except at close quarters. Capt. Byron shifted two of these back to the sternports of the main deck and hauled two of the heavy quarter deck carronades to the taffrail.

Inch by inch all afternoon crept the *President* and the American fleet. Determined not to be the aggressor in the absence of formal notification of a state of war, the *Belvidera* held her fire. At half-past four the *President,* now within six hundred yards of the *Belvidera's* quarter, fired her starboard bow-chaser. Commodore Rodgers himself pulled the lockstring. A main-deck 24-pounder below the bow-chaser was next fired, and the American commodore again discharged the forecastle gun. One cannonball went through the *Belvidera's* rudder casing and into the after gunroom, and two crashed through Capt. Byron's cabin, killing two men and wounding seven more who manned the sternchase guns.

The last shred of doubt as to the existence of a state of hostilities being removed, the *Belvidera* began to fire.

Lieutenant William Henry Bruce was pointing the larboard 18-pounder in the sternport when there was a fourth crash from the *President* and a ball struck the gun fair in the muzzle, splitting it and wounding the officer with the fragments.

But it was a costly shot for the Americans. This second discharge of their maindeck gun burst the weapon and blew up the forecastle, killing and wounding 16 men and breaking a leg of the eager commodore.

In the confusion the brave *Belvidera* men plied

the *President* hard from their three stern guns, killing and wounding six more men. Like a bull maddened by the darts of a matador the great ship—she was so much larger than the *Belvidera* that she should have sunk her with two salvos—yawed from her course and fired all her guns on one side. But the iron hail flew over the frigate, only making holes in her sails, and she slipped on through the water, leaving the *President* further astern. Crash! Crash! Crash! went the *Belvidera's* stern-chasers, as fast as they could be fired and reloaded, and the splinters flew from the American ship's bows with every discharge.

Taking heart from the fact that the whole broadside had been discharged without bursting any more guns, the *President* came on again, firing her bow-chasers. It was hot work aboard the *Belvidera.* Like nearly all British vessels at the beginning of the war, her gun fittings were wretched. The long bolts, breeching hooks and breechings of her guns broke continuously, injuring Capt. Byron and several men, and the fire of the enemy splintered the maintopmast, the crossjack yard and two other spars; but as fast as damage was done it was replaced.

The crossjack yard, upon which she was dependent for most of her after sail, was "fished;" that is to say, the broken parts were brought together as by splints; what might be called a major operation in any marine hospital or shipyard, and certainly one reflecting great credit on the ship's company which could perform it under fire on the high seas; firing, at the same time, as fast as they could load the stern guns in their cramped quarters.

At 5 p.m. once more the *President* tried the effect

of a whole broadside. She was up within 400 yards of the *Belvidera* when she turned to bring her guns into play. Again her shots went wild, and the manoeuvre to deliver them lost her some distance. The poor shooting, following the precision with which the first four shots had plumped into the *Belvidera,* proved that the *President's* gunner's nerves were all a-jump from the disaster of their maindeck gun.

At 5.20 p.m., the *President,* regaining her lost position, fired rapidly from her two bow-chasers, and again yawed across the *Belvidera's* stern, delivering two broadsides which did little damage. As she swung across the course she was well peppered by the *Belvidera's* stern guns, now almost redhot from use. Lieutenants John Sykes Bruce and the Hon. George Pryce Campbell, Capt. Byron's remaining officers, fired three hundred rounds that June afternoon. When the *President* came up again the *Belvidera* took her by surprise, yawing as though to fire her starboard broadside into her, as she came head-on. To avoid being raked the *President* yawed too; and the *Belvidera,* swinging back smartly on to her course, gained a few yards more.

At 6.25 it was evident that if the *President* continued steering straight she would bring the *Belvidera* immediately under her broadside and sink her. The *President,* it should be remembered, was a ship of 1,576 tons, with 450 men and 54 guns, her main battery 24-pounders.

The *Belvidera* was a ship of 946 tons, with a crew of 230 men, and 42 guns, principally 18-pounders. Even should the *Belvidera* succeed in beating the *President* off, her own capture would be certain in the

crippled state into which the combat would throw her, for the remainder of the American squadron was almost within gunshot, and coming fast.

So Capt. Byron turned to another resource. At 6.25 he cut away four ponderous anchors. He threw overboard two heavy ship's boats from each side. And he started fourteen tons of drinking water and let it run through the scuppers!

Thus lightened the gallant *Belvidera* once more crept away from the *President,* and her crew performed another "major operation" in spar surgery. They now fished the main topmast, which had been almost shot in two. Had it come down, the flight, if not the fight, would have been over. It was held together with capstan bars lashed in a bundle around it!

The *President* dropped back to where she could not deliver a broadside without yawing. But the running fight continued. At 6.30 the *Congress,* almost as formidable as the *President,* but not so fast, opened fire. Her sails, uncut by combat hitherto, brought her up close enough to use her bow-chasers. But her shots missed, and the concussions killed her way. She no longer gained, once she began firing; but every salvo from the *Belvidera's* stern guns seemed to shoot that lightened ship ahead.

As the bells struck ending the second dog watch —8 p.m.—the *Belvidera* ceased firing, hauled up to a fresh course, and set all her starboard studdingsails, and ghosted along into the darkening east. By midnight she was out of sight; and the plop! plop! plop! plop! of weighted hammocks dropping into the sea from the *President's* gangway told how deadly had been the defence of the vanished British frigate.



OFF NANTUCKET SHOALS. June 23rd, 1812.

Left to right:—1. U.S. brig *Argus;* 2. U.S.S. *United States,* the "waggon of the American navy;" 3. U.S.S. *Hornet,* sloop-of-war, commanded by Capt. Lawrence, later of the *Chesapeake;* 4. U.S.S. *Congress,* firing her bowchasers; 5. U.S.S. *President,* yawing to fire broadside; 6. H.M.S. *Belvidera,* plying her sternchase guns; in the circle, as she appeared through the telescopes of her pursuers.

V

Byron of the *Belvidera*

THE *Belvidera* had saved the "plate fleet." Next morning the interrupted pursuit of it was resumed. On June 23rd the Jamaica convoy, protected by the *Thalia* and the *Reindeer*—of whom you shall hear much more soon—was in latitude 39 degrees north and longitude 62 degrees west, nearly 650 miles further east than the American fleet, and a little further south.

The chase of the *Belvidera* led Commodore Rodgers to the north. He was on the western edge of the Banks of Newfoundland by June 29. On July 1, east of the Banks, he was thrilled to see on the water orange peels, cocoanut shells and the litter from the decks of homeward-bound India-men.

"The Commodore and his officers promised themselves a West Indian dessert to next day's dinner," says James. But the dinner was a long time a-dishing. Nothing happened until July 9th, when another sail was sighted. She was a little British privateer, and was easily run down and captured. Her captain said —perhaps with his tongue in his cheek—that he had seen the Jamaica fleet only the evening before.

Canvas was crowded on and the Commodore stood to within twenty hours of the English Channel. Had he been as bold as wise he would have waited there and whether he got the Jamaica fleet or not, he would have snapped up prizes where the convoys separated for their home ports. But he turned about and raked

the Atlantic backwards by way of Madeira; and arrived back at Boston disgusted with lack of luck and surplus of fog; six days out of seven, he reported, the horizon five miles away was invisible, and frequently his own vessels could not see one another.

The very existence of the "plate fleet" has since been questioned by some Americans, including that eminent authority, Admiral Mahan, but it is established beyond doubt that, however misinformed Rodgers may have been of the date of its sailing or its whereabouts, a convoy was on the Atlantic while he was, and anchored safely "all in the Downs," six days before he reached his home shores!

It speaks well for the British convoy system, even in the days of the slow-moving sailing ship of uneven speed, that a hundred merchantmen, ignorant of the fresh war, could be shepherded across the Atlantic in safety by a couple of small ships of the Royal Navy.

The battered *Belvidera* skimmed on to Halifax with the news that the American fleet was out and acted as though war had really been declared. Even then Admiral Sawyer, on the Halifax station, thought it might be another unauthorized attack, like that of the *President* on the *Little Belt* the year before, and released a few American vessels which his industrious subordinate, Capt. Byron, had picked up on the way and brought in as prizes. On the evening of June 27th, however—the day the *Belvidera's* signal flags snapped out the word of war to the watchers on Citadel Hill in Halifax—he despatched the fast-sailing schooner *Mackerel* to Portsmouth with the news. She arrived there on July 25th, a month and a week after the actual declaration of hostilities; a contrast to the instantaneous

knowledge of the ultimatums which plunged the world into war in 1914!

The *President* had four men killed and 18 wounded in her attempt to capture the *Belvidera* and her casualty list was further swelled by the injuries in the explosion of her main deck bow gun. The loss of the *Congress,* if any, under fire, has never been learned. The slow-sailing *United States* and the smaller *Hornet* and *Argus,* were never quite close enough to taste the sting of the British stern-chasers. The *Belvidera* had two men killed and sixteen wounded.

The *Belvidera* was pursued by five ships with 194 guns and 1,555 men. Capt. Byron's defence of her compares very favorably with the defence Stephen Decatur, a justly honored hero of the Americans, made of the *President* against smaller odds eighteen months later.

PERHAPS the reason no one knows of the *Belvidera's* exploit is because it passed at the time into the mere day's run of the British Navy; much as the heroic Broke, whose pen equalled Chesterfield's when he chose, disposed, in his log-book, of his epochal victory off Boston Light:

"June 1.
"Off Boston. Moderate.
"A.M.—w. Laurence.
"P.M.—took *Chesapeake.*"

The "w" was his abbreviation for "wrote," referring to his challenge, which might have been penned by Dumas for one of his Musketeers, so eloquent is it, so well calculated to bring about a duel, so eminently honorable to its sender and its recipient. The misspelling of Lawrence's name is typical of a great

sailor's simplicity; all he had in mind was that it was necessary to "take one of those great American ships" —it did not matter which, or who her commander was —"and send her home for a show."

Broke was a better captain than clerk, a better fighter than writer. Describing his own part in the boarding of the *Chesapeake,* he tells of how he "stepped" on to her aftermost carronade muzzle and over her rail, instead of "leaping aboard" or "flinging himself upon the flinching enemy," as the mildest-mannered historian might say.

Nor was Broke a unique example of modest, self-effacing narrators in the navy of 1812. Read Whinyates' report of the defence of the *Frolic,* in which he and his men displayed heroism seldom equalled by the fighters of any nation. He is profoundly regretful over the temporary capture of his ship; but has hardly a word to say of the hopeless handicaps under which he suffered, and no word at all indicating his own heroism. Byron, of the *Belvidera,* was another Bayard in battle, but bashful as a V.C. in recording his experiences.

Byron was a British captain whose work warms the heart as you read the faded brown ink of the records of the War of 1812, even as the rolling verse of his better-known nephew and namesake fills the mouth and the mind.

He came by his seafaring aptitude naturally. He was a nephew of that Admiral John Byron commemorated in the forecastles of the navy by the sobriquet, "Foulweather Jack," and in the salons of the literati by his distinguished grandson's line: "He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore." Admiral Byron, a comrade of

Anson, spent his life in storms and shipwrecks and battles with the French and Spanish.

Capt. Byron's defence of his ship against odds of five to one exemplified his resource. A few weeks later he was in another game of hare and hounds, with the parts reversed. This time he was one of the hounds; and he proved almost as successful as a hunter as he had been valiant and elusive when chased. It never fell to his lot to "take one of those great American ships and send her home for a show," as Broke did. Byron's was the exacting routine of blockade duty.

While blockading Chesapeake Bay on Feb. 8, 1813, he sent some of the *Belvidera's* boats, with those of the *Maidstone, Junon* and *Statira,* under Lieut. Kelly Nazer, on a cutting-out expedition.

A large American letter-of-marque schooner, appropriately named the *Lottery,* had fitted out for a voyage to Bombay and was waiting the opportunity to dodge the blockaders. She was armed with six 12-pound carronades, and had a crew of twenty-five men, it being her owners intention to combine a trading voyage with a privateering cruise. Privateers were fitted out solely to prey upon the enemy's commerce. Letters-of-marque were traders licensed to make captures.

Nine British boats, and 200 men, made the *Lottery's* escape impossible. Her captain, John Southcombe, of Baltimore, offered a gallant resistance. The attacking boats lost thirteen men through his well directed fire of grape. It was only when Capt. Southcombe himself was mortally wounded and all but six of his twenty-five men had been killed or hurt that the schooner was carried—a most gallant defence, and not

by trained navy men but men of the American mercantile marine.

Capt. Byron had the dying trading-skipper brought aboard the *Belvidera,* where she lay in Lynhaven Bay, and, as Americans at the time acknowledged, "treated him with the greatest attention and most delicate courtesy." When he died he sent his body ashore, under a flag of truce, for burial. "In this, as on many another occasion," said Theodore Roosevelt, "Capt. Byron showed himself to be as humane as he was brave and skilful."

The *Lottery* was an important prize. She was pierced for 16 guns, and the British armed her with that number, and added her to the Royal Navy, rechristening her *Canso.* She was a vessel of 225 tons and built fit to go around the world.

No faded bunting in captor's halls commemorates the *Belvidera;* for the splendid reason that no foe was ever able to make her lower her colors.

VI

The American *President*

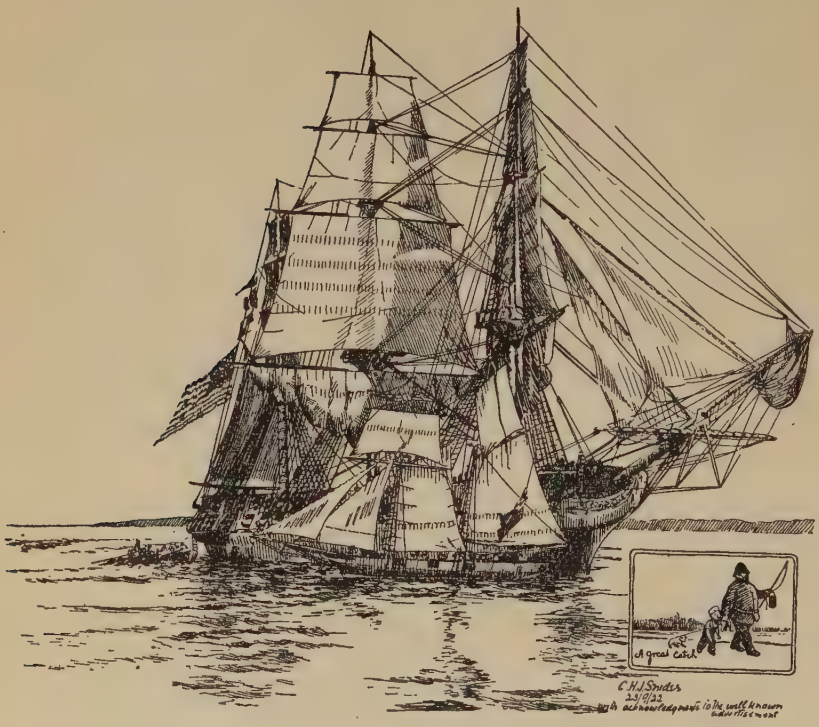
IT puts rather a different face on affairs when it is remembered that of the thirty-seven British naval flags in the United States collection of trophies thirteen came from the Erie squadron of six vessels built in the wilderness and captured in the Battle of Put-in Bay, and several of the others are duplicates or do not represent captures at all.

The captive flags in the halls of Annapolis, do not represent an equal number of captured British vessels, nor do they commemorate thirty-seven combats in which Americans were victorious.

Several of the flags are in a sense duplicates or even triplicates. The pennant, jack and ensign of the *Detroit,* for example, make three trophies, but commemorate only one victory. Thirteen flags from Lake Erie and three from Lake Champlain are memorials of two victories there and the capture of ten vessels, seven of them very small. The *Avon* trophy flag and the *Beresford* flag are trophies of British vessels crushed in combat, but not captured; the *Frolic* flag is a souvenir not of a British defeat but of the capture of an American ship and the rescue of a British vessel from the enemy.

It is with no intention of minimizing victories at sea, of which the Americans had a glorious if minor share in the War of 1812, that these facts are pointed out; nor is it hoped to explain away all our defeats, after the fashion of the donkey owner, who succeeded

admirably in reducing his beast's ration by a straw a day until he got down to the last straw—when the donkey died.



THE *PRESIDENT'S* CAPTURE OF THE *HIGHFLYER*

Off New York, Sept. 23rd, 1813. The relative size of the two vessels has not been exaggerated in the picture.

The British navy has a better collection of battle victories, but we have no collection corresponding to the American one of battle trophies. It is fair to ex-

amine the merits of each capture scored against us when we offer no display of the captures we have made.

One of the flags at Annapolis is an exceedingly fragmentary small red ensign. Spread out, the tatters measure 9 feet 5 inches one way by 5 feet 7 inches the other; a good-sized yacht's ensign of to-day. The trophy is catalogued:

"Ensign of the British schooner *Highflyer,* Lieutenant William Hutchinson. Captured by the United States frigate *President,* Commodore John Rodgers. Action fought off New York, September 23, 1813."

There have been many *Highflyers* in the British navy, and there is one yet, a long, low cruiser, whose brown-and-black camouflaged hull made the sea safe for Americans in the Great War. She was on the Bermuda station, and the United States navy men who got their training in those islands came to know her very well.

The *Highflyer* of a hundred years before was a much humbler craft—a 96-ton schooner, with six light guns, used as a tender to H.M.S. *San Domingo,* one of the squadron blockading the American coast in 1813. She was commanded by the *San Domingo's* second lieutenant.

The *President* which captured her was sixteen times the size of the *Highflyer.* The latter was not much larger than the *President's* jolly-boat.

It is evident that an "action" could hardly be "fought" between the two.

The *President,* then flying the flag of Commodore John Rodgers, was returning from her second wild-goose pursuit of the Jamaica fleet and of the Archangel fleet; that cruise in which she put into North Bergen, in the Shetlands, for water, and in which she

was ingloriously chased for four nights under the midnight sun by two little British vessels.



THE LITTLE *HIGHFLYER'S* ENSIGN

All in tatters, but still in existence, preserved in a case among the naval trophies at Annapolis, Md.

The *Highflyer* on Sept. 23, 1813, mistook the returning *President,* of whose whereabouts she had no knowledge, for one of her own squadron, then blockading New York. The strange frigate hoisted what happened to be the British private signal for the day, and the *San Domingo's* tender naturally stood toward her for instructions. Being under the guns of the enemy when she discovered her mistake, she hauled down her flag and was taken in triumph into Newport; a capture, certainly, but not one to gloat over. Commodore Rodgers, however, was thankful for small mercies. The *Highflyer* was but his twelfth prize in five months, and they were all paltry.

The *President* made one more cruise. She sailed on Dec. 4, 1813, and celebrated Christmas Day of that year by running away from two strange frigates which got close enough to fire on her ere she escaped in the darkness. Commodore Rodgers did not know that they were the French frigates *Nymphe* and *Meduse;* and the Frenchmen did not know that they were firing on a friendly American vessel; although they might have known she was not British, since she was going from them, not coming towards them.

When the *President* got back in May, 1814, Capt. Stephen Decatur took charge of her; Stephen Decatur, the duellist, destined to escape Tripolitan scimitars and British roundshot, only to perish by the hand of his own countryman in that little Golgotha on the borders of Washington known as the Bladensburg duelling ground; Decatur, who said, "My country, may she ever be right; but my country, right or wrong!"

Opposite the flag of the *Highflyer* hang in memory's hall the flag of the *President* herself.

BLACK and bitterly cold it is at 5 o'clock of a winter's morning; and nowhere was it blacker and more bitterly cold than on the North Atlantic, fifty miles east of Sandy Hook, on the morning of the 15th of January, 1815.

All the day before a gale had raved in squalls of snow. At night it cleared, with the stars crackling in the wintry heavens, through which still howled and ranted the northwest wind. Leaning away from the smiter, three British blockaders breasted the swelling hills of storm-lashed water, fighting back to the ceaseless watch and ward they kept on the port of New York.

The nor'-wester had blown them off. The nor'-wester would also blow out the American ships they had blockaded for months. So reasoned Capt. John Hayes, of H.M.S. *Majestic,* commander of the British squadron; and with the first easing of the gale which he had ridden out hove-to, he shook the snow from his furled sails and began beating towards the track he was sure the enemy would take. They would hold the lee of the land for a few hours, then strike out to sea. Somewhere to windward and to the east he would find them; and he drove the *Majestic* through the night, while the ice formed in great globes on the muzzles of her lower deck guns and caked her bows with thickening masses of solid white. Her two consorts, the *Pomone* and the *Endymion,* stormed in the *Majestic's* wake, iced to the topsail clews.

Sharp bit the frost, but sharper still the eyesight of the muffled lookouts bit the darkness. As two bells struck in the black chill of the morning watch—five o'clock ashore—came the cry from aloft, "Sail ho! Sail ho! Two on the weather bow!"

Shivering drummer boys warmed themselves beating the lusty tattoo which called all hands to quarters. As the topmen laid aloft to shake out more sail they could see the strangers—two miles to windward, a small brig and a large ship—flying towards them before the roaring wind. Suddenly the ship hauled up east by north and the brig ran off southwest.

"Let the little fish go," said Capt. Hayes. "Sheet home the royals and close with the ship!"

"Sail ho!" again hailed the lookouts. "A point abaft the lee beam!"

The stars in the east were paling. Against the coming dawn a third ship showed as a tiny speck.

"Capt. Lumley!" hailed Capt. Hayes to the *Pomone* as that frigate waded by. "Bear up and investigate the sail to leeward!"

"Ay, ay!" answered Capt. Lumley, with all the cheerfulness of a dog told to drop his bone. The *Pomone* had been gaining on the chase more quickly than her flagship or the *Endymion.* She rounded in her after braces and went roaring off with icicles flying from her twanging jibsheets.

Daylight proved the chase worth while. The ship first sighted, the one to windward, was the U.S.S. *President,* one of the three biggest Yankee frigates; one of those great vessels, almost as powerful as line-of-battle ships, which had astounded the world with their victories earlier in the war; victories won because these near ships-of-the-line were opposed to frigates of only half their strength.

At last one of them was really matched. The *Majestic* was just the *Presidents* weight; fifty-six guns to the *President's* fifty-four, but those fifty-six throwing

somewhat less metal. The *Majestic* was a razee, that is, a small ship-of-the-line cut down by the removal of her upper gun deck. Structurally she was as strong as the *President.* Her two consorts, the *Endymion* and the detached *Pomone*, were frigates little more formidable than the *Guerriere, Java* and *Macedonian,* which had gone down before the heavier force of the *President's* sister ships, the *Constitution* and the *United States.*

With daylight the *Majestic* fired three shots. All fell short. The *President* was miles to windward, and the *Majestic's* chase guns had an effective range of a mile and a half. The concussions checked her, and as the wind moderated into a stiff breeze the lighter *Endymion* passed the flagship and took up the long stern chase.

The *Pomone,* evidently satisfied with the stranger she had been sent to investigate, had swung into the race again, and the stranger, barely in sight from the *President's* deck, was following. She was the *Tenedos,* Capt. Parker, another small British frigate; and she crowded all sail to be in at the death, with eight miles of seawater separating her from the prey.

The *President,* blockaded in New York since May, 1814, had made a desperate dash to sea in the snowstorm. The skiffs buoying the channel out from the Narrows had been wrongly placed. The frigate touched on the bar, and pounded till ten o'clock at night, when she drove over on the rising tide, with the loss of her shoe, or false keel, and a considerable quantity of jettisoned stores.

With the *President* went a store-brig, christened the *Macedonian* in celebration of Capt. Decatur's cap-

ture of the British frigate of that name. Decatur had planned a commerce-destroying cruise, with the *Macedonian* as a floating depot. No one on this side of the Atlantic yet knew that the war had been "over" for three weeks now and that the commissioners had signed the peace treaty in Ghent on the preceding Christmas Eve.

Once she gained the *President's* wake and could fly with the wind a point free, the dauntless *Endymion* overhauled the larger ship. By noon she was dangerous. By two o'clock the *President* was blazing away at her with her stern guns. The *President* had emptied her water casks, cut away her anchors, thrown overboard her boats, spare spars and provisions. Her swelling sails, from the royals downward, were shining sheets of ice, for bucketmen kept wetting them constantly to close up the pores of the canvas and make it hold the wind; and as the water fell it froze.

It was half-past two before the *Endymion* got close enough to try her bow-chasers. She was much smaller than the *President,* but no weakling. Her guns were 24-pounders. The *President* had some 42-pounders, and a ball from one of these giants went through two of the *Endymion's* sails, blew the stern out of one of the two boats she had left, and then ploughed through the quarterdeck into the maindeck! The *Endymion* had lost several boats in the preceding October trying to take the *Prince de Neufchatel* by boarding. She had been unable to replace them.

As skilful as he was brave, Capt. Henry Hope, placed the *Endymion* so that the *President's* side guns shot ahead of her and the shot from the *President's* stern guns flew parallel to the *Endymion's* course. All

afternoon the British ship worried the American like a dog at the flanks of a bull. At dusk she was on the *President's* lee quarter. Her guns were ploughing splintered furrows of white wood in the black side of the fleeing ship.

When the *President* luffed, to bring her stern guns to bear, the *Endymion* would forge ahead. When the *President* would swing back, the *Endymion* would yaw or zig-zag, to keep out of the line of her broadside fire.

For twenty minutes the *Endymion* galled the great ship in this fashion. Suddenly the *President* brailed up her spanker and ran off south, to cross the *Endymion's* bows and sink her with a raking broadside. The British frigate nimbly spun on her heel and ran south, too, abeam of the *President,* firing broadside for broadside. Sail after sail, stripped from the yards by the dismantling shot, flew off on the winter wind like boughs lopped by pruners' shears. The plight of the bucketmen of the two ships, skeeting down the frozen canvas in the dark, was an unenviable one—soaked to the skin, chilled to the bone, liable at any moment to be blown from the royal-yard by flying chainshot, or to have the mast collapse beneath them and hurl them into the ocean a hundred and fifty feet below.

The *President's* topmen began a heavy musketry fire as the ships closed. The *Endymion* hauled nearer and her marines poured in volley after volley at half musket-shot distance.

At 6.45 the tormented *President* went back to her old east-by-north course. The *Endymion* fired two raking broadsides at her and hauled up to her former galling position on the lee quarter. For half an hour they ran thus, most of the *President's* fire going ahead or astern of her target.

At 7.15 one salvo swept away two of the *Endymion's* studdingsails and took her last remaining boat from the quarter-davits. For nearly ten minutes after that the *President* was silent; then a blast from her clipped off another studdingsail and necessitated that nautical operation which ever interests landsmen, splicing the mainbrace. This brace is a very long rope, in several parts, which controls the mainyard and mainsail in a ship. It chafes through often, and its repair may be the occasion for liquid refreshments.

While the *Endymion's* mainbrace, shot away in the last broadside, was being spliced, literally if not figuratively, the *President* hauled suddenly to the wind, in the hope that her pursuer's masts and gear would not stand the strain, or that she would be out of control. But spars and spliced mainbrace alike stood the test, and the gallant little ship hauled up and ran across the *President's* stern, raking her with a tremendous broadside at close range.

Only one stern gun from the *President* replied. She kept away, heading east again, and firing at increasing intervals. At 7.58 she fired her last shot and showed a light. The *Endymion* took this for a surrender-signal, and sent all hands from the guns to bend fresh sails. The *President,* clothed in studdingsails to her royals, kept on running.

SO ended the first stage of the fight; the *President,* thoroughly whipped, but able to run away; the *Endymion* capable of finishing her foe, but for the moment unable to perform the task owing to loss of sails; and unable to take possession of her beaten foe, even had the latter stood still, owing to loss of boats.

The *Endymion* had gone into action with 319 men and 27 boys. She had fought all day alone against a much larger vessel with a crew of 465 men and four boys. Save for the effect upon the morale of the *President,* the part taken by the other British vessels up to the time the *Endymion* paused for breath was as innocuous as though they had all been in Halifax dockyard. The *Endymion* alone had fired a shot which told—and if she fired one she fired hundreds. Her loss had been 11 killed and 14 wounded. The *President* had had 26 killed and 70 wounded. She was a beaten ship.

The brave *Endymions* gritted their teeth and flew about the business of bending canvas in the freezing dark. One bar-shot had taken fourteen cloths out of the foresail. A cloth is one strip of the many which, sewn edge to edge, make up a sail. The gap from that bar-shot was nearly thirty feet wide. From the list of sails got up from the hold and bent to the yards in the breathing spell the *Endymion* must have been stripped in that running fight of six hours with the *President* till she had little left but two topsails. The crew replaced:

Three courses, or lower sails, one for each mast.
The maintopsail.
The jib.
The foretopmast staysail.
The spanker.

This was work which would take a rigger's gang a week in these vanishing days of the sail. How did the *Endymions* do it in the dark? Perhaps the following may explain. It is from

"Queftions and Anfwers Recommended to the Perufal of young Gentlemen defigned

for, or belonging to, the Sea, in order to Refrefh their Memories, previous to that Examination they muft pafs through, before they are appointed to a Commiffion in the Royal Navy," and the date is 1794:—

"Q.—You are fent down in the dark for a top-fail, how do you know a mainfail from a fore-fail, or a main-top-fail from a fore-top-fail?

"A.—If it has three bowline cringles it is a main-fail, if it has but two it is a fore-fail; if it is marled abaft the footrope, it is a main-fail, if before it is a fore-fail; if a main-top-fail, it has four bowline-cringles, if a fore-top-fail but three; all top-fails are marled to the rope, because the footrope is ferved."

Such was the training which enabled the midshipmen of the *Endymion* to carry out the complete rehabilitation of their ship that winter night. How many yachtsmen could be trusted near the sail-locker with such instructions?

In addition to bending seven new sails the crew of the *Endymion* knotted her shrouds and set up and renewed her standing and running rigging. In 54 minutes she was again in full pursuit of her fleeing foe.

Meantime, the swift *Pomone* had regained the position she had lost under orders at daybreak. The zigzags the *President* and *Endymion* had made had enabled the *Pomone* and the *Tenedos* to cut the corners, the first-named getting to windward of the *President* for the death-flurry, the latter steering for the lee-quarter position from which the *Endymion* had hurled her fatal blows.

As the *Tenedos* passed the *Endymion* at 9.45 Capt. Hope hailed her, as the nearest ship: "You take her,

Capt. Parker, when she strikes; we have no boats left!"

"Ay! ay!" hailed Capt. Parker back, with greater joy than Capt. Lumley had imparted to the same answer to a different order that morning.

The *President* was getting loggy as the water gained in her hold. She had been cut through and through and lengthwise and diagonally by the *Endymion's* shot. Three of her lieutenants and 23 of her men had been killed. She had seventy wounded. Six of her guns had been dismounted. Some of her powder was wet. And the enemy were closing in, the *Pomone* gaining on her even without studdingsails set.

The *President* was in hard case; but not as far spent as the British *Guerriere* or the *Java* or the *Reindeer* or the *Boxer* or the *Frolic,* while their flags still flew.

Stephen Decatur was a great sailor, and his personal courage was unquestionable. He had taken the ketch *Intrepid* into and out of the harbor of Tripoli with all the cannon of the port and castle blazing at him, and he burned the captured frigate *Philadelphia* under the feet of her Tripolitan crew. Single-handed he had slaughtered the treacherous Moor who had murdered his brother. He had conquered the *Macedonian.* He stood high in the estimation of his countrymen; but his genius was of that order which soared with success and sank with defeat. His was not that bulldog tenacity which was the plentiful and splendid heritage of the British navy.

Byron of the *Belvidera* faced worse odds and fought off a fleet of five, including Decatur's present ship. The *President,* despite her losses in this last running fight was stronger than any of her immediate

foes. Her crew had mustered 469 that morning. She had 373 men left unhurt. She was still capable of totally disabling the *Pomone* and the *Tenedos.* They were only 38-rates, frigates of light construction. She might have again clipped the *Endymion's* wings and brought her to a stand still. It took a gale of wind to make the ponderous *Majestic* sail with the others; she was now miles astern.

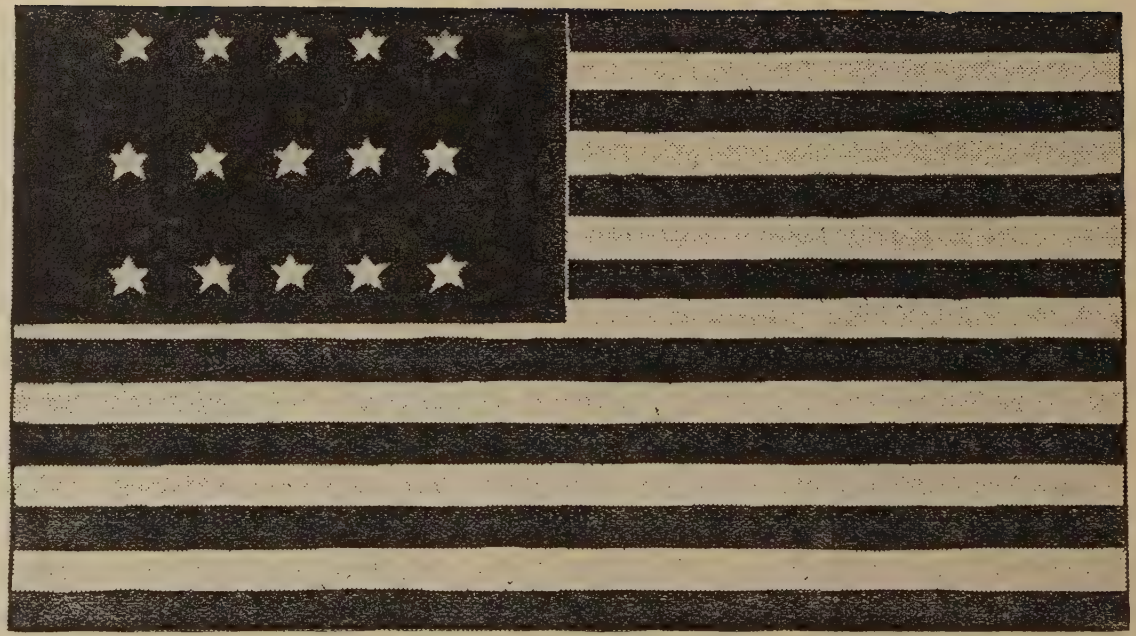
But the pounding and the pumping and the all-day duel in the bitter cold had taken the heart out of the *President.* At 11.15, four hours after the last shot from the fleeing American, the *Pomone,* ranging up on the *President's* port or weather quarter, luffed and fired her starboard broadside. Only one shot struck, but Decatur had had enough. He shortened sail, luffed up, hailed that he had surrendered, and again hoisted in the mizzen rigging the light with which he had perhaps unintentionally deceived the *Endymion.*

The *Pomone,* not understanding the signal and not hearing the hail, fired a second broadside, which went wide.

"They will fire as long as we show that light!" declared Schoolmaster Bowie to Capt. Decatur, as they paced the quarterdeck, beating their arms against their chests to keep warm, and anxiously awaiting another crash from the freezing darkness.

"Luff her more!" called Decatur to the men at the wheel. "Lower that lantern. Call out again, someone, that we have surrendered!"

The *Pomone* blotted out the stars to the north. Close aboard on the opposite side ranged another vessel, and an English voice roared the unvarying sea-greeting:



Where the *President's* flag went when she was captured is not known to the writer. The British have never greatly cared for such things. As we had the *President* for years—until she was broken up—there was no necessity of hanging up her captured ensign. The picture, however, shows what that ensign was like. It had fifteen stars and fifteen stripes, one for each State, like all American flags of the period. Sometimes the stars were arranged in a circle and sometimes in rows.

"What ship is that?"

"This is the United States frigate *President* and we have surrendered!" announced Capt. Decatur for the third time.

There was no more firing. The creak of gear running through frozen blocks told of three ships shortening sail and heaving-to. Boats appeared at the *President's* sides simultaneously—one from Capt. Lumley of the *Pomone,* one from Capt. Parker, of the *Tenedos.*

The surrender was made at 11.30 p.m. Forty-five minutes after midnight the gallant *Endymion* arrived on the scene of triumph. It was three o'clock in the morning of January 16th when the *Majestic,* the only ship on a par with the *President* in fighting power, caught up with the captors and captured. Capt. Decatur's sword was delivered to Capt. Hayes, as commander of the squadron; who courteously returned it, and placed the *President,* very justly, in the *Endymion's* charge.

No flag can be found to commemorate the capture of the *President;* but her fate was very complete retribution for her capture of the tiny British Schooner *Highflyer* in the very same waters sixteen months before.

VII

Decatur of the *President*

ON the way to Bermuda with her prize the *Endymion* had heavy weather and lost every stick except the stump of her mizzenmast. There had not been time to properly replace the shot-stranded rigging ere this second January gale arose. The *Endymion* had to throw overboard her upper-deck guns, and Capt. Decatur, prisoner of war in her cabin, consoled himself with the hope that his own late frigate, the *President,* which was completely dismasted in the same gale, would never reach England, even if she should gain Bermuda.

In this, however, Decatur was disappointed. Both ships made port. His own captivity was short, for peace had already been made. But the *President* was held to be lawful prize, as were the British vessels the Americans took after the war had ended. She was refitted in Bermuda and sent to England "for a show." The prize money for her was divided equally among the *Endymion, Pomone, Tenedos* and *Majestic.*

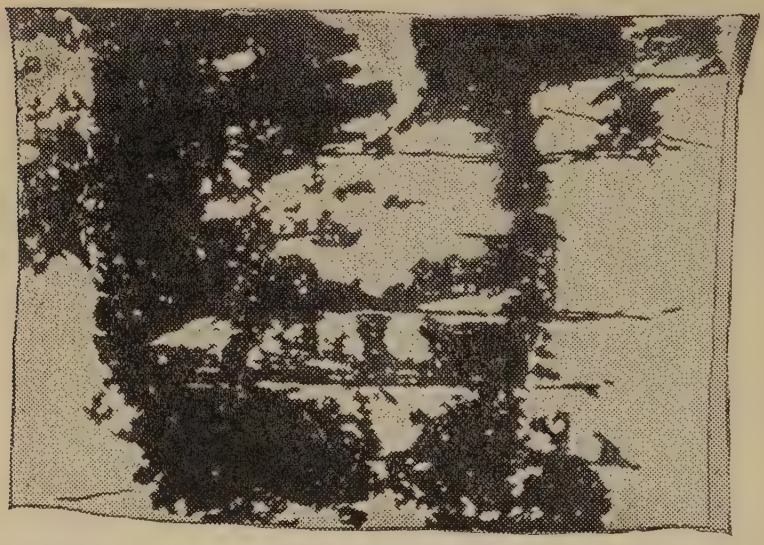
Although they were given the freedom of Bermuda almost immediately upon arrival the stay of the vanquished *President's* crew was not as pleasant as Americans now find a late-winter sojourn in those delightful isles. Some of the desperately wounded died; there is a grave in the very ancient cemetery at St. George's, at the east end of the island, of one of the *President's* midshipmen.

Stories spread of attempted trickery on the part of Capt. Decatur; stories started possibly by his hoisting a light, as though in surrender and then continuing his flight, stories which seemed to be strengthened by the strange vagueness in the American captain's official letters, as to the actual number of men he had on board and their casualties, and by the hints he threw out in his official report of the possibility of the *President* never reaching England.

Editor Ward, of the Royal Gazette, of Bermuda, printed a statement that Decatur had concealed sixty-eight men in the hold of the *President* with the intention of having them rise and overpower her prize-crew as soon as she had parted company with the British fleet. This might have proved practicable had Decatur himself been left on board, and had the captured *President* been started off for England alone, instead of for Bermuda in the keeping of the valiant *Endymion*. Capt. Hope, of that ship, promptly sent his late prisoner a letter disclaiming any connection with the newspaper article. The governor, anxious apparently to heal all the wounds of war, demanded that the editor retract his statement. The editor did so; and added a footnote, in what was quite "loud" type for the day, that the retraction was made merely as an act of generosity and a palliative for the irritated feelings of prisoners of war, but that what had first been said was correct and that Decatur was the man who had planned and authorized the ruse!

His Excellency the Governor sent another letter threatening, in substance, withdrawal of the "Royal" from the Gazette's name, but the "Royal Gazette and Colonist Daily" is still published in Bermuda and

carries the official reports of the legislature along with its regular news. The obdurate editor was, however, attacked on the street by Midshipman R. B. Randolph of the *President;* and the latter made a somewhat inglorious retreat from his winter paradise, getting himself hoisted into a boat at the Market Wharf crane, and sailing for the United States, in order to dodge a warrant for arrest for assault and battery.



Red Ensign of the Algerine frigate *Mashouda,* captured June 17, 1815; now in the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. One of Commodore Decatur's squadron's captures.

THE *President* not only added a name to the British navy list, but for years served the useful purpose of showing how strongly armed and heavily built were the so-called "frigates" of the Americans with which they had accomplished their early victories.

The *President* measured on the keel for tonnage computation 148 ft. 7¾ inches. Her actual length was

just under 180 feet, and her breadth 44 ft. 5 inches. She had 33 ports on each side. Her gangways were ten feet wide. Her guns were 8½ feet long and weighed 48½ hundredweight each.

These were dimensions and equipment unheard of in British frigates, or in anything British rating less than a ship-of-the-line.

Had the *President* had four feet more beam she would have been larger than a British "seventy-four" of the largest class, say, 1,800 tons. She measured 1,576 tons. Her masts and yards were as lofty and as long as any seventy-four's, and her sides were twenty inches thick at the maindeck portsill. A British seventy-four's were nineteen inches thick. Both dimensions elucidate the term "wooden walls."

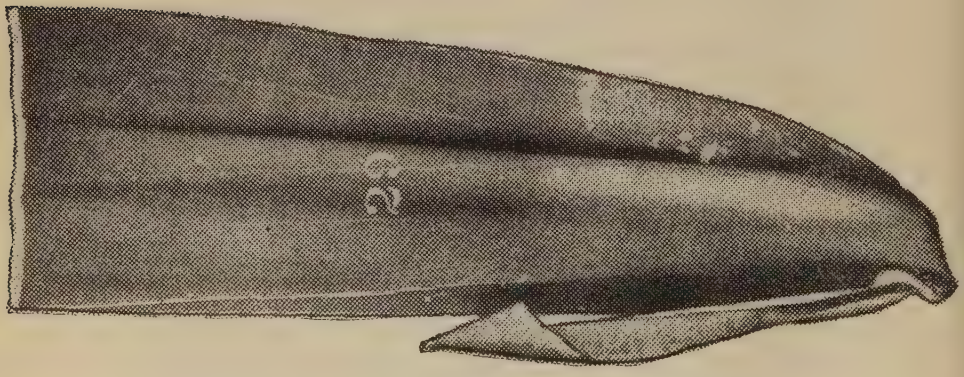
The *President* was built in New York in 1800 at a cost of $220,910.

The capture of the *President* was the greatest single defeat suffered by the Americans in the War of 1812. Its moral effect was less than that involved in the defeat and capture of the *Chesapeake,* because the war had run its course, and the British navy had already asserted that superiority which earlier events had seemed to question. The material loss to the nation was greater, for the *President* was one of the three largest vessels in the United States, and her capture left America with only ONE frigate on the ocean.

An American committee investigating the disaster made itself ridiculous by finding that the *Endymion* was CONQUERED in the contest! Even Theodore Roosevelt, writing 70 years afterwards, departs from his usually sane view of the merits of his countrymen's conduct by claiming "Commodore Decatur did not



Red Ensign of the Algerine brig *Estedio,* captured June, 19, 1815; now in the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. One of Commodore Decatur's Mediterranean trophies.



Red Pennant of the Algerine brig *Estedio,* captured June 19, 1815, now in the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. Another of Commodore Decatur's Mediterranean trophies.

board the *Endymion* merely because her consorts were too close astern."

Commodore Decatur did not board the *Endymion* because his own ship was too badly mauled to do anything but run, and could not do that well. Had he been able to take the *Endymion,* or even to fight her longer, the "consorts astern" could not have prevented him. They were not close enough. It was three hours and seventeen minutes from the time the *President* showed her first light and ran away from the *Endymion* till the leading British frigate, the *Pomone* caught up with her. It was not time which prevented the *President* taking the *Endymion,* but British bluejackets.

Admiral Mahan, the greatest sea-student of our age, is under no such delusion as the absurd committee or the ardent Roosevelt. He says: "It may be questioned whether the moral tone of a military service, which is the breath of its life, does not suffer when an attempt is made to invest with a halo of extraordinary heroism such a resistance as Decatur made by his own showing. Unless the *President* was really thrashed out by the *Endymion,* which was the British assertion, she might have put ONE of his Majesty's 38-gun frigates out of commission for a long time; and that, in addition to the *Endymion,* the two fastest British vessels —would have been no light matter in the then state of the New York blockade.

"If the finding of the American Court of Inquiry, that the *Endymion* was conquered, while the *President* in her contest with her had suffered but little injury, be admitted, there seems NO REPLY TO THE COMMENT THAT THE *President* SURRENDERED WITHIN MUSKET-SHOT OF A 38-GUN FRIGATE WHICH WITH THREE OR FOUR BROADSIDES SHE SHOULD HAVE ANNIHILATED."

"War," says the great commentator, "is violence, wounds and death. Needless bloodshed is to be avoided; but even more at the present day is to be deprecated the view that the objects of war are to be sacrificed to the preservation of life."



CAPT. STEPHEN DECATUR

As Gilbert Stuart portrays him in the painting in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

FORTUNATELY for Stephen Decatur his fame does not rest upon his defence of the *President.* He was home and off to sea again within a few months

of that incident; this time in command of an American squadron against the Barbary corsairs he had fought in 1804; and four very frail and ragged Moorish flags rest to his credit, along with the British ensign he took in battle from the *Macedonian.* One is a tattered remnant of nine horizontal stripes of red and yellow silk of unknown history, but labelled in such a way as to associate it with the lost *Epervier,* which started home from Gibraltar on July 14, 1815, with a copy of the treaty of peace with the Barbary powers, but never arrived.

Another is a red square, reduced to almost cobweb condition, but representing the ensign of the Algerine brig *Estedio,* captured by the brigs *Epervier* and *Spark* and the schooners *Torch* and *Spitfire* of Decatur's Mediterranean squadron off Cape Palos, near Albafuera, Algiers, June 19, 1815. A red pennant 20 feet long and 4 feet wide, tapering to a point, also commemorates the captured Moor, who seems to have put up as good a fight as Decatur did against similar odds in the *President.* And the fourth flag is another red square, even more cobwebby, the battleflag of the Algerine frigate *Mashouda,* which Decatur fought and captured in his flagship, the American *Guerriere* (named after the British *Guerriere*), off Cape de Gata, Spain, June 17, 1815. The *Mashouda* was the flagship of the Barbary admiral Rais Hammida.

STEPHEN Decatur's end was melancholy. In the prime of life and full tide of prosperity he took to himself a beautiful wife and built a home on Lafayette Square in Washington, across the way from the White House. The mellow old red brick mansion still peers, rather furtively, through the trees towards

the Presidential portico. Across its iron-railed stone threshold on the 22nd of March, 1820, Decatur strode out into the darkness of early morning, muffled to the eyes; and praying that his wife should not hear.

Late that afternoon he was carried in, over the same stone threshold, with a great wound in the chest. He had fought a duel at Bladensburg with his old colleague, Commodore James Barron; a duel Barron had sought and which Decatur had not the moral courage to refuse.

Barron was captain of the ill-starred *Chesapeake* long before Lawrence died in her. In 1807 the British frigate *Leopard* overhauled the *Chesapeake,* searched her for seamen, and carried off four of her men, claiming them as British subjects. One was hanged as a deserter; the others restored, with apologies, after years of forced service. It was a high-handed wrong, which could not have been perpetrated had Barron had the *Chesapeake* in proper condition.

Decatur, much against his will, was a member of the court of inquiry and court-martial which censured Barron. The latter stayed in Copenhagen while the War of 1812 was in progress. After it was over he returned to America. He blamed Decatur for his inability to again obtain a post in the naval service, and the duel was the result. Both principals were carried back to Washington, supposedly mortally wounded. Decatur died the following evening, but Barron recovered.

VIII

"Old Ironsides" Under the Union Jack

SOON after her escape from Commodore Rodger's squadron it was the *Belvidera's* turn to play the hunter. On the 5th of July, after getting a fresh set of anchors, boats and stores in Halifax, she sailed in company with the *Shannon,* and the *Aeolus,* a smaller frigate, to begin that iron blockade of the American coast which speedily strangled American commerce.

This was, of course, before the great exploit of the *Shannon* in capturing the *Chesapeake.* But Capt. Broke, in virtue of his seniority, had command of the squadron, even though the *Aeolus* flew the flag of Lord James Townsend, and the *Africa,* which joined later, under the command of Capt. John Bastard, was a line-of-battle ship.

It has been stated that the first capture in the War of 1812 was the British sloop *Alert;* and some fun has been had over the contrast between her name and her performance. The *Alert* was captured on August 13, 1812, and thereby hangs a tale; but a month earlier, on July 16, Capt. Broke's squadron captured the American brig-of-war *Nautilus* off Barnegat Bay, New Jersey.

The *Nautilus* had been built at Baltimore in 1803 for the navy, at a cost of $18,763. She did well in the Tripolitan war, but had been materially altered. Fourteen guns were too much of a deckload for a vessel of her size—185 tons—even if she was of the famous Baltimore clipper build; and her original rig of a

schooner would have been more helpful than the square sails of her new brig rig. Lieutenant Stephen Crane, her commander, worked every wrinkle to save his vessel. He threw overboard her spare spars and provisions, stove in his water-butts and abandoned his boats, anchors and cables. Still the relentless British squadron gained, and he knocked away the wedges of his masts, so as to give his spars more play, which, according to the theory of the time, increased a vessel's speed. Finally, in desperation, he hove all his shot overboard, and, opening the lee gunports, cut the breechings and let all the cannon on that side plunge into the ocean. Still the squadron gained, spreading out on him like a fan; so, defenseless from his own efforts at escaping, he hauled down his flag. Somewhere the ensign of *Nautilus* should commemorate the fact that ours were the first honors in the War of 1812.

Next day Capt. Broke's squadron sighted the best ship in the American navy. This was Capt. Isaac Hull's command, the *Constitution,* affectionately known as Old Ironsides. She was built in 1797, and like the *Nautilus* took part in the battle of Tripoli; but she is afloat to-day, and occupies in the hearts of her countrymen much the same position the still older *Victory* does with us.

With the exception of the *Africa* the *Constitution* was unmatched in size and strength and armament by any vessel the British had available on this side of the Atlantic. While rating as a frigate she was built like a line-of-battle ship, although she did not have two complete gundecks. But her armament—thirty long 24-pounders on the maindeck, twenty 32-pound carronades on the quarter deck, and two bowchasers—was

of heavier calibre, although of less aggregate weight, than that of a "74," which was the usual rating of the smaller line-of-battle ships. The *Africa* was only a 64. The *Constitution's* sides—of wood, not iron, despite her nickname—were eighteen to twenty inches thick.

When the *Constitution* saw the British squadron off Barnegat in the still summer afternoon, the four ships bore north-northwest. Shortly afterwards she could make out another sail in the northeast, although this one was too far away for the British to see. In those days of slow-running news ashore and slow-crawling news afloat, Capt. Hull did not know the whereabouts of the American squadron under Commodore Rodgers which was still at sea hunting the Jamaica "plate fleet." He thought the strange sails might be Rodgers' ships but reasoning that if the unknown vessels were foes it was better to meet one than four, he wore around at six o'clock in the evening and headed so as to cross the fifth vessel, setting all his light sails in order to come up with her.

At ten o'clock they were near enough for signalling; but although the lanterns swayed up and down the masts for an hour neither vessel could understand the other's communication. Capt. Hull concluded he had an enemy in sight; and he was right.

This fifth vessel was the *Guerriere,* the most-hated British frigate on the American station; because, under an earlier captain, she had high-handedly carried off sailors from several American vessels which were unable to prevent or punish the act. The British claim was that the men taken were either deserters from our

navy or British subjects liable to impressment in the navy wherever found.

All night the breeze was faint. At half past three in the morning of July 18 the *Guerriere* was only half a mile away. In the growing light she could make out both the *Constitution* and the vessels of Capt. Broke's squadron; but she could not determine the character of the latter. To the *Guerriere* as to the *Constitution* occurred the possibility that these might be the American squadron under Commodore Rodgers. Once more the signal halliards were manned; but the British squadron, recognizing the *Guerriere,* and supposing that she must recognize them, made no answer, hoping to lure the *Constitution* towards them.

Capt. Dacres of the *Guerriere,* finding himself apparently between two fires, wore and stood away. Right there the opportunity of capturing the *Constitution* was lost. The *Guerriere* was a weaker vessel than the *Constitution,* and in poor trim; but if she had engaged the *Constitution* she would have crippled her somewhat and held her until the others could come up.

The wind continued very light from the south. At 5 a.m. broad daylight showed the *Belvidera* and *Guerriere,* now known to each other, far to the northward, on the *Constitution's* lee quarter. Miles away to the westward, and directly astern were the *Shannon, Aeolus* and *Africa.*

So faint was the air that the vessels stood still, ducking and curtseying at long distance on the smooth swells. Capt. Hull lowered all his boats, and began towing to the southward.

'Twas a backbreaking job, towing a ship of 1,576 tons by means of ship's boats themselves heavy and

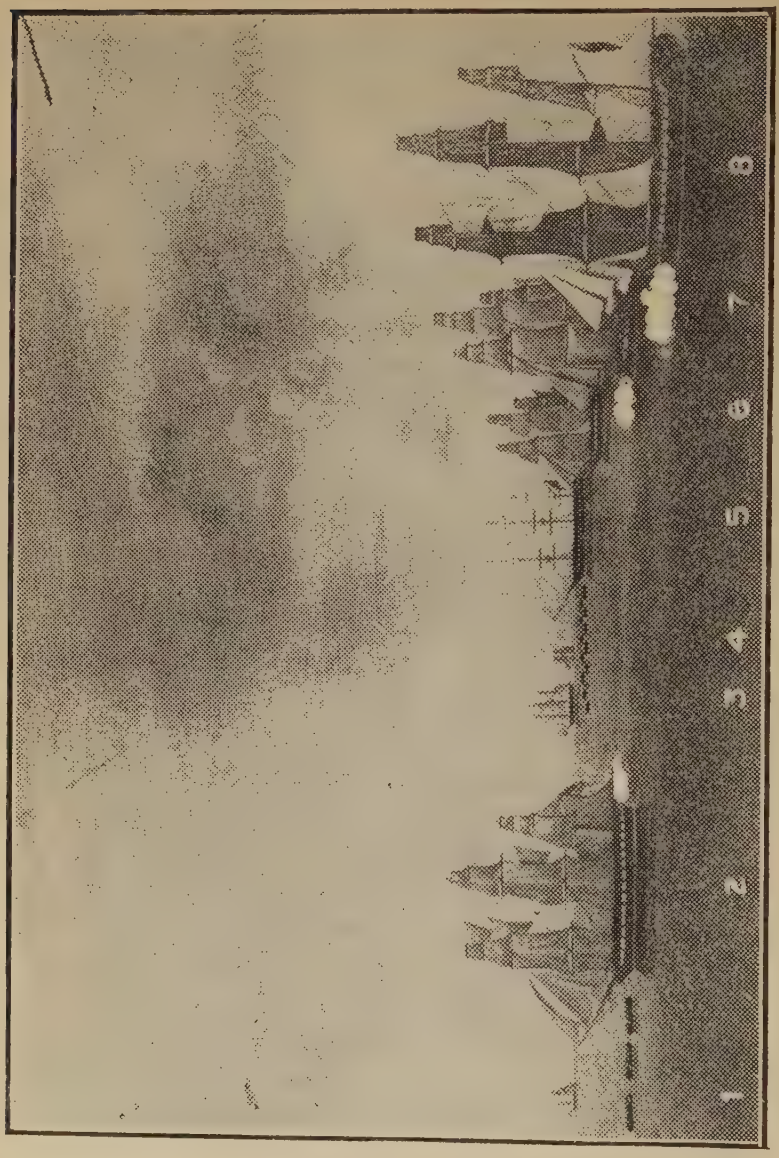
hard to row. Any yachtsman who has towed a five-ton cutter with a dinghy knows what the task means. But many hands make light work, and the *Constitution's* crew of four hundred and fifty rendered frequent reliefs of her six boats possible. Capt. Hull cut away the taff-rail at the *Constitution's* stern, and got one of the bowchasers and a main-deck 24-pounder aft. He also had two 24-pounders shifted from the main battery to his cabin windows; imitating almost exactly the example of Capt. Byron in the *Belvidera* the month before.

The British ships began towing also. Capt. Broke attempted to do with the *Shannon* what the poor old *Guerriere* should have done. He had all the boats in his part of the fleet towing his ship, so as to bring her up close enough to engage and cripple the quarry. At 6 a.m. the *Shannon* tried the range, but her shots fell short, and a slight breeze wafted the *Constitution* onwards. At 6.30 it died away, the *Shannon* began to gain, and American hearts sank.

"Sir," cried Hull's first lieutenant, Charles Morris, "we are in only twenty-six fathoms. Can we not kedge her faster than she will tow?"

"Try it," said Capt. Hull.

So two kedges—small anchors—were lowered into the ship's cutter, and the cables were made fast to one of them, and all the spare rope in the ship bent on to the cables. Then while all the other boats towed, the cutter rowed half a mile ahead, the line being paid out as she went. When it was all out she dropped the kedge and the men on the *Constitution's* forecastle began the "stamp and go," walking from stem to stern with the dripping cable and so pulling the vessel



THE CHASE OF THE *CONSTITUTION*

THE CHASE OF THE *CONSTITUTION*

From an oil painting, said to be an original or copy of Thos. Birch, in the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. The drawing is not as accurate as is the drawing in other pictures attributed to Birch. Key: 1, Possibly captured U.S. brig *Nautilus.* 2. U.S.S. *Constitution,* with her boats towing her as she fires her stern-chasers. 3. British line-of-battle ship *Africa.* 4. British schooner, mentioned as being present but not taking part, or possibly the captured *Nautilus.* 5. Capt. Broke's *Shannon,* towed by all the boats of the fleet, with her sails furled to save air-resistance. 6. Probably British frigate *Aeolus.* 7. Probably British frigate *Belvidera.* 8. Probably British frigate *Guerriere.* Both the last two British vessels fired bow-chasers at the *Constitution.* The hostile ships were never as close together as represented, the nearest British vessel being always actually as far away from the *Constitution* as the schooner (No. 4.) appears to be. The *Belvidera,* if No. 7 be she, boasts that rare bit of canvas, a "moon-raker," on her loftiest mast.

ahead. As soon as they had a length of it in they paid out the end to the cutter, and the boat started off for another half-mile, when she dropped the second kedge and came back for the first, which had been tripped, or lifted from the ground.

Thus all morning the *Constitution* crept over the bottom of her native shores. Sometimes a puff of breeze would ripple the surface and the perspiring crews would get a respite while the boats were hoisted just clear of the water by means of the davits or spare spars rigged outboard. The *Shannon* was within two miles—the nearest she got—at 7.30, and the *Constitution* opened fire, but could not reach her. A light air from the southward put the *Constitution* on the port tack and brought the unlucky *Guerriere* almost within range. Capt. Dacres fired his guns, but with no effect.

Then the wind dropped again, and the *Constitution* only crept away by strenuous towing and by pumping ten tons of drinking water overboard.

Within the hour a slight shift in the reviving breeze brought the *Belvidera* nearest; so Capt. Broke ordered all the boats of the squadron to tow her.

The resourceful Byron bettered Hull's or Morris' kedging expedient by leading his cables in one hawse-pipe and out the other, so that one kedge was always going ahead of the ship. This brought the *Belvidera* up so close that at 2 p.m. she opened fire with her bow-chasers and the *Constitution's* stern guns answered her. The cannon balls splashed the water around the *Belvidera's* boats. She never got nearer than a mile and a half or two miles.

As in a yachtsmen's drifting match in our own times, the calm weather produced rare samples of light

canvas. The ships were draped in the curious blanket-shaped staysails of their day, with studdingsails extending the area of their square sails at every yardarm. Such curiosities as "ring-tails," increasing the area of the spanker, and "monkey gafftopsails" blossomed forth. Normally royals were the highest sails then carried; but there are recorded references to the *Constitution's* skysails, patches of canvas above the royals, and an old painting shows one of the ships, presumably the *Belvidera* of the resourceful Capt. Byron, sporting a moonraker on her mainmast, making the seventh storey in the tallest tower of canvas ever seen on a sailing ship.

Capt. Hull, despairing of escaping, made every preparation to disable the *Belvidera* or the first frigate that closed, and so be captured with at least one scalp in his belt.

At 3 o'clock came a light air again. The *Constitution* felt it first. She was clad in canvas from skysails down, and every sail was constantly drenched, to close the pores of the duck and make it draw the better. Her yards were manned as for harbor drill, with hundreds of seamen hauling and passing the buckets of salt water. For three hours they had this change from heaving in cables or bending at the oar. The shots from the *Belvidera* fell farther and farther astern.

At 7 o'clock in the evening it was dead calm again, and for four weary hours the five British ships and one American kedged and towed. When darkness settled the *Belvidera* was abreast of the *Constitution* but far to leeward.

Just before eleven o'clock the sails of the American ship filled and all the boats were hoisted up but the

first cutter. At midnight the *Belvidera* was a blob of blackness on the lee horizon.

The first morning light of July 19 showed the *Belvidera* tacking to the eastward to cross the *Constitution's* wake. The *Constitution* also came around on to the starboard tack, and crossed the bows of the *Aeolus* beyond cannon shot. The heavy-footed line-of-battle ship *Africa* was so far to leeward as to be out of the chase; but the British frigates, although all individually much inferior to the *Constitution* in fighting power, hung grimly on. All five frigates were now going seaward on the starboard tack.

At 9 a.m. still another sail was sighted, coming towards the squadron with a fair wind. It was an American merchantman, and probably she, too, thought this was the ubiquitous Rodgers squadron. She stood boldly on, and the wily Byron hoisted American colors in the *Belvidera* so as not to undeceive her.

It must have been a sight for the gods to see the Stars and Stripes flying from the mizzenpeak of the British *Belvidera,* where Commodore Rodgers and all his fleet had failed to place them three weeks before! The wideawake Hull, however, frustrated the stratagem by an equally surprising piece of flagwork. He hoisted British colors on the *Constitution!* As the *Constitution* was the nearest vessel, the oncoming merchantman wildly hauled his wind and went off on the other tack; and the British fleet was too busy to go after him.

All forenoon the chase continued, the *Constitution,* being the largest ship, fore-reaching on them all. At noon it fell light again. The *Belvidera* was then two and a half miles astern, the *Shannon* three and a half

miles on the lee-quarter, the others of the fleet five miles to leeward. The breeze did not die out, but held light all afternoon. At 4 p.m. the *Belvidera* had dropped back till she was four miles astern and to leeward.

Then a thunder squall banked up. At 6.45 it had spread its menace over the whole heavens. The British captains had to prepare for the worst; for the loss of masts on this hostile coast would mean not only the escape of their quarry, but their own destruction, should an enemy encounter them crippled and hundreds of miles from their nearest base—Halifax. The poor *Guerriere* was to prove the truth of this ere long.

The *Constitution* furled her light sails and took two reefs in the mizzen topsail. This looked serious to the British captains and they began to shorten down for heavy weather. When the squall burst they were snug —and remained so. But Hull, getting the squall first, and correctly judging the strength of the blow from his local knowledge, cracked on his fore and main topgallantsails as soon as he felt the weight of the wind, and the *Constitution,* hidden in the sheets of rain, ran off at eleven knots.

The squall was over by 7.40, and all hands were again making sail. The *Belvidera* was now two points more to leeward; the *Shannon, Guerriere* and *Aeolus* were hull down, and the *Africa* was almost out of sight. All night the wind was light, and the "skeeting-buckets" swished their briny contents continuously into the *Constitution's* sails. But when the morning of July 20 dawned all pursuers were below the horizon; and "Old Ironsides," having worn English colors for the first and last time, went on into Boston.

Hull's defence of the *Constitution* was not as heroic

as Byron's defence of the *Belvidera,* for it was not made under fire. The British pursuers were never much nearer than two miles, and their shots fell short. But in resourcefulness Isaac Hull was a match for any man who ever trod the quarterdeck; and the long strain of the chase, extending into four days and three nights, was a severe test of the morale and discipline of his crew—a severe test nobly met.

IX

The Ship That Would Not Run

THE *Guerriere* had, with the best of intentions, bungled the capture of the *Constitution* when, with a British squadron supporting her, she was nearest ship to that adversary on July 17, 1812. When the two again encountered, on August 19, the *Guerriere* was alone and was no more fit to fight the *Constitution* than a crippled pensioner on the way to the hospital would be fit to fight a heavyweight champion coming from his training quarters.

But there was no thought of running in the mind of Capt. James Richard Dacres or any man of the *Guerriere's* crew. As soon as they saw the enemy coming, they hove to; in land language they stopped and waited for him.

It was a cloudy day, with the wind from the northwest, and the North Atlantic writhing and spuming under the lash of a strong breeze.

The *Guerriere* had been in need of a refit when the squadron chased the *Constitution* in July. After that she had been detached and ordered to the dockyard in Halifax. She had been twelve days making two hundred miles in that direction against head winds.

Her bowsprit was sprung, her mainmast splintered where lightning had struck it, her foremast and mizzen rotten. Her boatswain's, carpenter's and gunner's stores were expended; her powder was wet, and she was short of provisions.

The *Guerriere* had been captured from the French six years before. Like all French ships she sailed well "by the head," that is, trimmed so that her bow was lower than her stern. To bring her down forward she had two extra eighteen-pounders for standing bow-chase guns, giving her a total armament of thirty long eighteens on the maindeck and sixteen 32-pounder carronades and two long nines on the quarterdeck and forecastle. She had also a launch-carronade. The only things she had in plenty were cannon and courage.

The meeting place was in 41 degrees 30 minutes north and 55 west, approximately 500 miles southeast of Halifax, and 750 miles from Boston.

When the *Constitution* was sighted she was fresh from an overhauling in Boston and bound Bermuda-wards, hoping to intercept the Atlantic traffic to England. She was heading south-south-west, across the *Guerriere's* track. As the direction of the wind gave the enemy the weather-gauge. Capt. Dacres reefed his rickety ship and hove her to on the starboard tack. There she waited her foe, heaving and tossing on the Atlantic rollers, a long red, white and blue pennant streaming from the head of her shattered mainmast, a British ensign flowing from the spanker-gaff, another from the mizzen truck, and a Union Jack at the fore.

While they were priming the launch-carronade aboard the *Guerriere* in preparation for the combat, the priming iron snapped off in the touch-hole—thereby as effectively spiking that gun as though it had fallen into the hands of the enemy. The launch-carronade had an elevating carriage, enabling it to be aimed very high. It was the predecessor of the

"Archies" or anti-aircraft guns of 1914. It was a most effective weapon at close quarters, where it could be pointed against the sharpshooters in the enemy's tops. It will be remembered the *Shannon* cleared the *Chesapeake's* mizzen top in that way when she boarded her. The *Guerriere* needed her launch-carronade sorely soon.

The *Guerriere's* crew of 272 included nineteen boys and a number of American seamen. Some of these latter may have been impressed men; American skippers had long been complaining of sailors being kidnapped from their crews, under Britain's exercise of the "right of search," and Capt. Pechell, who had preceded Dacres in command of the *Guerriere,* had been particularly obnoxious to Americans in this regard. This was one of the causes of the war. But the men may have been serving voluntarily from before the time war was declared.

In any event Capt. Dacres was more chivalrous than Capt. David Porter, of the U.S.S. *Essex,* who tarred and feathered a British seaman who asked to be relieved from serving against his own country. Capt. Dacres ordered all the Americans in the crew to go below out of harm's way before the fight began. Seven or nine of them accordingly went down beneath the gundeck and remained there during the action. One American, through some accident, stayed by his gun and fought throughout with his British comrades.

The on-coming *Constitution* presented the greatest possible contrast to the *Guerriere.* She was a larger vessel, measuring 1,576 tons to the latter's 1,038, but the principal difference was not in size but in equipment. The *Constitution* was just seventeen days out



1. THE *GUERRIERE,* FIT FOR THE MARINE HOSPITAL, ACCEPTS THE *CONSTITUTION'S* GAUGE OF BATTLE.—The *Guerriere* is the small vessel, to the left, hove-to, awaiting the *Constitution,* on the right. The latter is running down before the wind, reefing her topsails as she comes.

after a thorough refit, following her strenuous experiences of July 17-20. She had 54 guns to the *Guerriere's* 49; but those guns were much heavier, throwing 24-pound shot where the British guns threw only eighteen. The *Constitution's* broadside was from 684 to 736 pounds, against the *Guerriere's* 544 to 590 pounds; and the *Constitution's* crew numbered 456 men to the *Guerriere's* 272 or less. The varying weights of the broadsides are according to the reports of different recorders. In construction the two ships differed as radically as in their equipment and conditions, the *Constitution* being very much more heavily built.

Capt. Isaac Hull, commander of the *Constitution,* has already been praised in these pages as a wary and skilful seaman. He was, by the way, a nephew of the general who invaded Canada and was captured at Detroit by Brock. Capt. Hull brought the *Constitution* into action with the proper proportions of boldness and caution, and fought her bravely and adroitly.

First he hauled on the wind and tied two reefs in his topsails, for there was plenty of pressure for manoeuvering, and the less sail aloft the less chance of spars carrying away. That was why all the old sailing ships used to shorten down before battle. When the reefing was accomplished the *Constitution* came on down before the wind, yawing from side to side to avoid being raked, and steering to pass astern of the *Guerriere.*

The ships had been in sight of one another at 2 p.m. It was ten minutes to five when the first guns spoke. The *Guerriere,* seeing that she likewise might be raked if the *Constitution* crossed her stern, fired her

starboard or weather batteries, filled her maintopsail, wore ship, that is, turned around before the wind, and hove to again on the opposite tack, firing her port guns as that side in turn was presented to the foe.

Both of the *Guerriere's* first broadsides went wide. Two shots struck the *Constitution,* some went over her, and some fell short. Either the *Guerriere's* standard of gunnery or her powder was bad; and the change of position, with the necessary alteration in the level of her guns, further contributed to the poor shooting.

The *Constitution* hoisted the Stars and Stripes at her peak, lashed another ensign in her mizzen-rigging, broke out a third flag at the fore-truck, and opened fire, at five minutes past five.

Following her original tactics of wearing ship and firing alternate broadsides to avoid being raked the *Guerriere* continued to stand away before the wind under topsails and jib. Working forty-eight guns in two broadsides was a severe task for a crew like hers, which did not average five men to a gun when the sail-trimmers were deducted. The gun crews had to run across the ship as each side was successively engaged.

Galled by the fire from the *Guerriere's* stern guns the *Constitution* set her foresail and shook out her maintopgallantsail and sheeted it home above the double-reefed topsail, in order to close up and shorten this phase of the conflict. This was at 5.40 p.m. At 5.45 she "brought the *Guerriere* to close action on the larboard beam, both ships steering (eastward) with the wind on the larboard quarter."

The frigates were now rolling along in the hard wind and high sea hurling five or six hundred-weight of iron at one another at a distance narrowing down



2. A STAND-UP FIGHT.—The *Guerriere* (right), fights broadside to broadside with her strong opponent till her mizzenmast is carried away by a 24-pound shot.

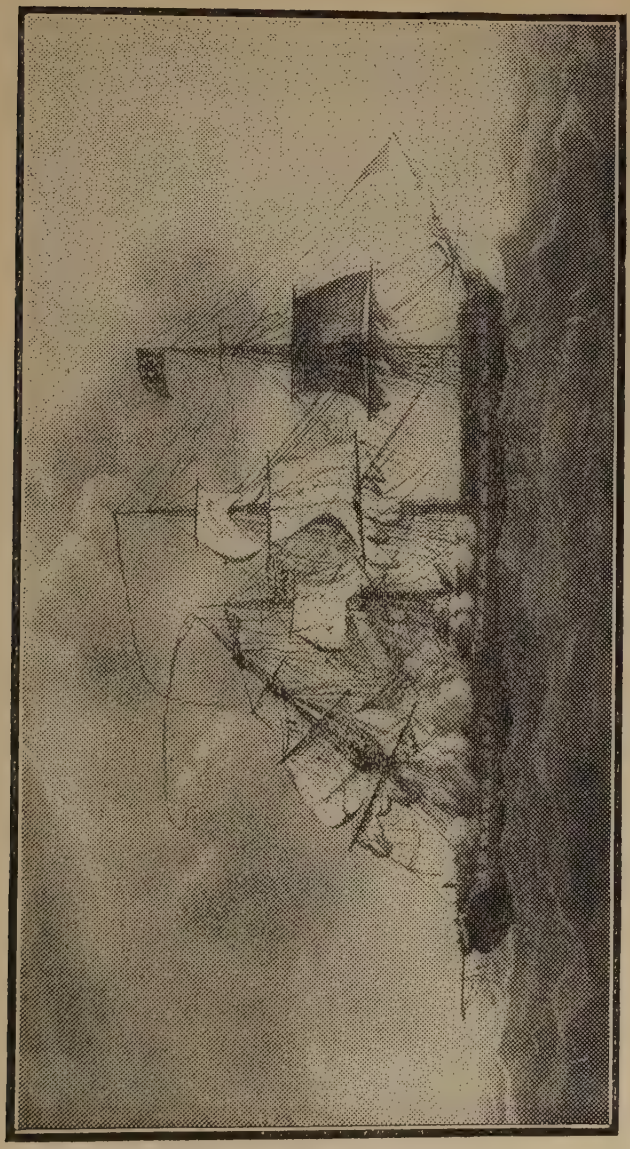
to fifty feet. The lack of precision of the weapons of a century ago is emphasized by the fact that neither was seriously damaged although this exchange lasted twenty minutes. The British bluejackets cheered as they timed their broadsides—four to the *Constitution's* three!

At five minutes past six, however, a 24-pound shot cut away the *Guerriere's* mizzen mast—the last and smallest of the three in a ship. It fell over her starboard quarter. The roaring sea hove it up against her and stove a large hole in the counter, or overhanging part of the stern.

The great mass of sails and spars dragging overside brought the *Guerriere* up into the wind against the influence of her rudder, although the helm was kept hard over. The *Constitution,* instead of rushing past her while in this predicament, skilfully placed herself across the *Guerriere's* port bow, and slowly crossing her path, with untrimmed sails shivering in the wind, raked her with broadsides which ploughed the whole length of her deck. She luffed short around the *Guerriere's* bows, raked her with the starboard guns, bringing down the main-yard on the heads of the quarter-deck gunners, then wore and raked the forecastle with the port guns.

At 6.15, ten minutes after the fall of the mast, the two ships rolled together in the great seaway, the *Guerriere's* bowsprit getting foul of the *Constitution's* mizzen rigging. That swung her so that the British ship lay with her starboard bow grinding against the American ship's port or lee quarter gallery.

"Boarders away!" called Captain Dacres. "Boarders away!" echoed the speaking trumpet of



3. DISMASTED BUT UNBEATEN.—The *Guerriere*, falling foul of her opponent, attempts to carry her by boarding. The shock of the impact snaps her remaining masts and she drifts clear.

Capt. Hull; but the ships, lying almost head and tail, were not close enough for the call to be obeyed.

Capt. Dacres leaped to the forecastle hammock nettings, cheering on his crew. When he saw the crowded decks of the *Constitution,* with two able-bodied men for every one in the *Guerriere,* prudence told him to wait till his carronades and musket men had made more progress towards levelling the odds.

Now was when the launch-carronade with its elevating carriage was needed. As he hesitated an American sharpshooter in the *Constitution's* mizzen top shot him through the back.

The marines in the *Guerriere's* tops rained their musket balls on the crowding Americans, killing Lt. Bush and wounding Lieut. Charles Morris and Sailing Master Alwyn, as they leaped up on their taffrail to board by the bowsprit. The starboard bow guns of the *Guerriere,* the only ones which would bear, blazed into the quarter of the *Constitution* at such close range that their wads set Capt. Hull's cabin on fire. Lieut. Hoffman, of the *Constitution,* fought the blaze with buckets while his comrades fought the gunners with bullets.

Heaving up on the roll of the sea the *Guerriere* wrenched her bowsprit clear of the *Constitution's* rigging and brought it down crash upon the blood-stained taffrail running across the American ship's stern.

The bowsprit, already badly sprung, was supposed to be the weakest spar in the whole ship. It proved the only survivor of all her rig.

The thud of the impact slackened the forestay, a doubled and tarred cable, each part as thick as a man's arm. The foreshrouds had already been shot away, and the rotten foremast, unsupported, fell over on the

starboard side, striking the mainstay. This, too, was a thick rope, tarred and doubled. The jolt was too much for the lightning-splintered mainmast. It also fell, leaving the *Guerriere* a sheer hulk, with only her bowsprit standing.

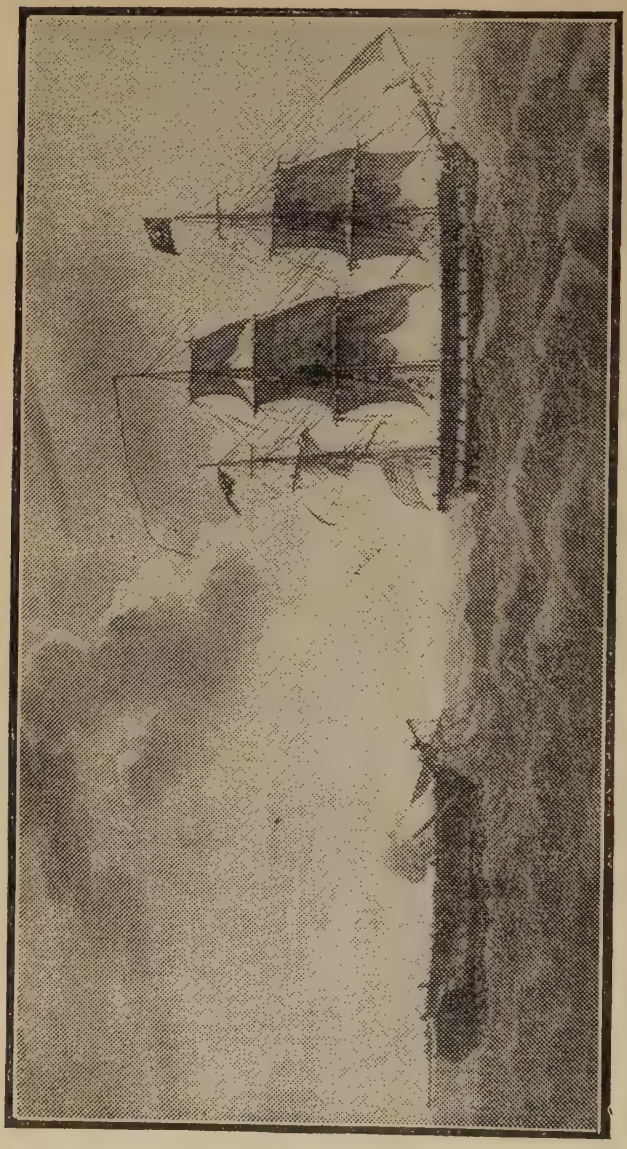
The two ships were locked together for eight minutes. The last heave, when the mainmast went, carried the *Guerriere* clear. At 6.23 the *Constitution* ranged ahead out of gunshot, and hove to in order to reeve new gear and fill fresh cartridges.

And was the *Guerriere* through—with all masts gone, captain shot through the back, twenty-three men killed and fifty-six wounded crowding the surgeon's room, and thirty shot holes pouring in water through the copper sheathing?

No! As she lay there, with her maindeck guns dipping into the sea with every roll, or careering across the decks as their rotten breechings parted and their long-bolts pulled through the decayed timberheads, Capt. Dacres ordered a fresh flag to be lashed to the stump of the mizzen mast.

One spar yet remained—the sprung bowsprit. This carried, after the fashion of the time, a spritsail yard, a survival of the days before jibs and staysails, when vessels hung a square sail at the end of the bowsprit, known as a spritsail or watersail.

The *Guerriere* crew remembered how the *Bellerophon,* dismasted like themselves, at the battle of the Nile, lived to fight another day through getting her spritsail to draw and carry her down the line. So doggedly they manned the pumps, secured the runaway guns, cleared the snakelike coils of fallen rigging that littered the decks and set their own spritsail on the battered bowsprit.



4. A SHEER HULK'S DYING EFFORT.—The *Guerriere*, with no masts left, tries to get going again by setting her spritsail, the cluttered canvas hanging from the yard on her bowsprit.

The patch of canvas barely gave the *Guerriere* steerage way before the wind, but she was once more answering her helm.

At 6.45 the *Constitution* having rove new braces, came after her again. As she ranged up on the starboard quarter for a coup-de-grace the spritsail yard, the *Guerriere's* last hope, carried away. She was now out of hand, a helpless wreck rolling in the trough of the sea, her cannon menacing only the gulls above or the fish beneath.

"Boom!" rolled the smoke from a lee-quarter gun, mingling with the brine as the shot was fired. Down came the jack from the stump of the mizzen. The fight was over, as the sun glared a red good night through the clouded horizon.

MANY surprises waited Captain Dacres as he was borne aboard the *Constitution*. Despite the agony of his wounds—he had been shot twice—he could not but note that, whereas his own maindeck was level with the water at every roll, the *Constitution's* was ten feet above it; a vastly different gun platform.

The *Constitution's* maindeck guns were ten feet long and weighed fifty-four hundredweight each; moreover they were of English make! They were fired through ports with sills of solid wood twenty inches thick; heavier construction than was used in a British line-of-battle ship.

The *Constitution's* masts and yards, too, were as long and as thick as those of a British seventy-four; and except for cut ropes, torn sails, and some splinters she seemed uninjured after all that fighting.

Capt. Dacres may have at first attributed the small

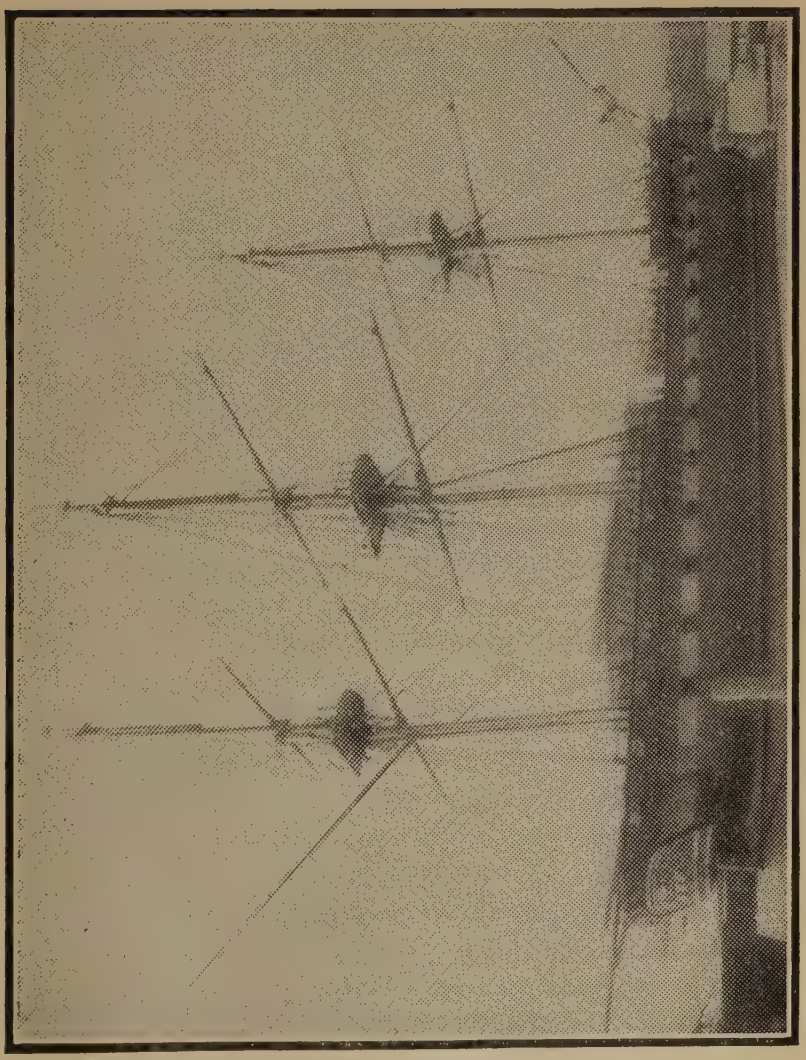
damage done to the *Constitution* to his own bad powder.

Observation must have shown him that the *Constitution* was so large and so strong that no batteries of the *Guerriere's* weight could make much impression on her; her spars were so stout they could be shot clean through by eighteen-pounders without showing the effect. In short the two-hour battle had not been between two frigates, but between a frigate and a ship-of-the-line; almost the equivalent, in terms of our time, of a combat between destroyer and a dreadnought, or between a cruiser and a capital ship.

Yet with that bull-dog tenacity which never recognizes defeat, the weakness and the strength of British character, Capt. Dacres declared at his court-martial—at which he was honorably acquitted—that he felt confident that if he only had his opportunity over again and was not so unlucky as to lose his mizzenmast early in the fight he would take the measure of the *Constitution;* and his sailing master and the master's mate, who had been through the mill with him, concurred in his opinion!

"I am so well aware," he averred, "that the success of my opponent was owing to fortune that it is my earnest wish to be once more opposed to the *Constitution,* with the same officers and crew under my command, in a frigate of similar force to the *Guerriere.*"

Capt. Dacres proved the sincerity of this profession. Three years later, when, in command of the frigate *Tiber,* of exactly the same rating as his lost *Guerriere,* he hunted the *Constitution.* He boarded neutral after neutral which had been halted by the American frigate, in some cases only a few hours be-



U.S.S. *CONSTITUTION* IN BOSTON NAVY YARD, in 1923, one hundred and twenty-six years after her launch.

fore. Once he actually caught sight of the *Constitution;* but the latter, believing the *Tiber* to be the *Eurotas,* a more powerful frigate, prudently ran away.

Other things Capt. Dacres noted while a prisoner aboard the *Constitution.* She reported only seven killed and seven wounded; but he could count thirteen wounded men at least. The explanation was that only severe cases were entered in the American record; whereas in the British navy every wounded man, although merely scratched, reported to the surgeon and was registered, so that he might receive the "smart-money" which eked out his slender pay.

The *Constitution,* too, used cartridges of sheet-lead instead of flannel or paper for the great guns. These gave an advantage of handling equal almost to one additional gun in three, as there was no necessity to sponge the gun after each discharge, and very seldom any necessity to worm it. The sheet-lead cartridges could be filled as required. The British were using the clumsier and slower flannel cartridges because they were cheaper.

And the musketry men in the *Constitution's* crew, it was noted, were "provided in a novel and murderous manner. Every cartridge they fired contained three or four buckshot."

Of his treatment on board the *Constitution* Capt. Dacres wrote: "Capt. Hull and his officers have treated us like brave and generous enemies; the greatest care has been taken that we should not lose the smallest trifle." But the Americans tried, and tried in vain, to get the *Guerriere's* seamen to enlist with them as the price of freedom.

Capt. Dacres survived his wounds and his mis-

fortune, but his ship did not live to grace the triumph of Capt. Hull's return to Boston. In spite of shot-plugs and the pumping and bailing of hundreds of hands the water gained and gained in her shattered hold. Above the normal water level she had been riddled by the *Constitution's* broadsides. Below the water line—five sheets of copper down—she had more than thirty shot on the larboard side; and she had the hole punched in her counter by the mizzenmast when it went overboard. She had no spars left to help her into port. It was evident that she was doomed. All her crew were transferred and she was set on fire. At 3 o'clock on the afternoon of August 20 she blew up; and the *Constitution* made sail for Boston.

THE capture of the *Guerriere* gave an enormous inspiration to American pride and patriotism. Wise observers might point out that the vessels were very unequally matched, that Capt. Dacres had done the creditable thing when escape was impossible in fighting to the last gasp and inflicting the maximum of injury upon the enemy before surrendering, but that the outcome of the conflict was inevitable.

American popular fancy, floundering in the depths of despair over the so far unsuccessful outcome of the war, seized upon this as a glorious victory over the might of Britain met "on equal terms."

It mattered nought that the *Guerriere* was fit for the boneyard and the *Constitution* of almost double her force even when she was in the pink of condition.

The *Guerriere* was a "frigate." The *Constitution* was a "frigate." An American frigate had whipped a British frigate thoroughly; a frigate the British had taken from the French in the course of twenty years'

triumphs over that nation at sea; a frigate that had, under an earlier captain, been particularly hateful on the American seaboard through the exercise of the right of search.

It made no difference that the term "frigate" as applied to these vessels conveyed no explanation of their relative sizes. The American public considered it absolute proof of equality. Nor is their enthusiasm, if mistaken, to be condemned. It was part of a generous wave of heroism which redeemed some of the sordid features of the war and carried that nation through, if not to final victory, at least to some immediate triumphs and an honorable peace. So much did the Americans think of this capture that they built a fine new frigate and called her the *Guerriere* in commemoration of the one they caught but could not keep.

THE taking of the *Guerriere* was the first of five sickening defeats we suffered in the War of 1812, defeats which taught us, slowly and painfully, essential lessons which our combats with the weaker nations of Europe had not brought out; the folly of pitting eighteen-pounders against twenty-four-pounders; the folly of pitting obsolete frigates against new vessels which more nearly approached our ships-of-the-line; the folly of pitting small, weak, ill-trained crews against large and competent crews of picked seamen; and, finally, the folly of neglecting gunnery.

The Admiralty's restrictions and discouragement of gun practice have already been mentioned in connection with Capt. Broke's experiences. Captains were left to pay for the powder they "wasted" in target practice. On the other hand, says James, "Highly to the credit of the naval administration of the United

States, the crews of their ships were taught the practical rules of gunnery; and ten shot, with the necessary powder, were allowed to be expended in play to make one hit in earnest."

To our people of 1812 the capture of the *Guerriere* was as dreadful a shock as the taking of the British guns by the Boers at Colenso was to us ninety years later. "Guns taken—impossible—there must be some mistake in the despatch," we told ourselves in 1899. "A frigate captured by the Yankees! It cannot be," was what they said in England and Canada. Halifax went into mourning when assurance came that the *Guerriere* would never again be seen on the North Atlantic station. At the Admiralty they received the confirmation of the bad news with less display but with slowly dispelled incredulity. We had to learn through a series of local disasters in 1812, as we had to learn through a series of local disasters in 1899, that a resourceful and freeborn enemy cannot be beaten on his native shores or native seas by second-rate efforts or indifferent weapons or the fetish of an traditional supremacy. The tradition of victory is no substitute for well trained valor combined with adequate numbers and superior equipment. The nation which rests on its laurels deserves to wither with them. Through the jolt of Colenso we were not helpless when the Great War came. Through the loss of the *Guerriere* we took the *Chesapeake*.

A Union Jack from the *Guerriere*—maybe the identical one which was lashed to the stump of the mizzenmast after the whole rig went over the side—is preserved among the trophies in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. It is a large, ac-



THE *GUERRIERE'S* PENNANT AND JACK, in the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.

curately designed and well made flag, 24 feet long by 13 feet wide. It is impossible to say whether the rents and tears in its faded folds are the ravages of moths and years or of grape and roundshot. Possibly both.

They have also at Annapolis the pennant of the *Guerriere*—a very lengthy strip of bunting, 46 ft. 9 in. long, 26 inches wide and tapering to nothing. At the wide end, for the first yard or so of its length, it is white, with a red St. George's Cross. The remainder of the flag is three pieces of red, white and blue, arranged horizontally. It is the "commission-pennant" of the ship, and, quite possibly, the one she wore in action. These whiplash pennants are still worn in the Royal Navy, even by destroyers and harbor-service boats. They are popularly supposed to commemorate Blake's retort to the Dutch Admiral Tromp, who sailed up the Channel with a broom at his masthead, signifying a clean sweep. The British answer was a whiplash, signifying a sound thrashing for the sweeper.

Britishers can view these captive trophies with pride unmixed with regret. They are the pothooks and hangers of an early and painful lesson, which we learned slowly but well; a lesson which taught us the way to the glorious victory of the *Shannon* in 1813, and kept us in the way of the glorious victories of the Falklands in 1914 and of Jutland in 1916.

X

A Pallid Trophy

RATHER distinctive, from its design and color, among the trophies which eleven decades have mellowed almost to a monotone in the United States Naval Academy, is a British naval ensign of pale blue, with a disproportionately large Union Jack in the upper canton; a Union Jack designed in defiance of all the present niceties of heraldry. By no stretch of the imagination can the red and white diagonals in it be reduced to either a proper St. Andrew's Cross or the so-called St. Patrick's Cross. They are merely a pair, or a pair of pairs, of shallow and disconnected V's; a solecism in Union Jack making which causes the discriminating of these latter days to wince. Sailors were less particular a century ago.

The flag is the ensign of the British ship-sloop *Alert,* captured by the United States frigate *Essex,* Aug. 13, 1812; the first British war-vessel taken by the Americans. They themselves had already lost their brig-sloop *Nautilus,* which was chased and captured, after throwing overboard her lee guns, by Capt. Broke's squadron off Barnegat Bay, N.J., July 16, 1812.

That the *Alert* should be so named and the first ship captured in the war was an irony for which fate was less to blame than the lords of the Admiralty.

In 1804, in the pressure of that long naval war in which France, Spain, Venice, Denmark, Holland and, eventually America were the enemies of Britain, the

Admiralty bought ten colliers and put them into service, much as we converted liners into light cruisers in 1914. By 1812 of the ten there remained only two —the *Avenger* and the *Alert.*

Naturally these ex-colliers were not manned by the pick of the navy. They had to take what they could get in the way of officers and men, and what they could get was what the more important vessels in the navy left.

As the more important vessels were sometimes forced to fill up their complements with jail-birds, cripples, superannuated seamen and children, what they left in the way of marine material was not very desirable. The invaluable James—invaluable because, in spite of his prejudice against Canadians and Americans, he was painstaking and accurate in his use of the official records of 1812 and was contemporary with them—says regarding the obtaining of ship's companies:

"The captain....had a considerably smaller crew to collect by having about one-twentieth part of that crew to form of boys and widow's men, or men of straw, and by being permitted to take a large proportion of landsmen." (The *Alert's* nominal crew was 100 men; she had actually 86 men and boys.) "Sometimes, when a captain, by dint of extraordinary exertions, had provided himself with a crew such as a man-of-war's crew ought to be, the admiral on the station to which he belonged would pronounce the ship "too well manned," and order a proportion of her best men to be drafted on board the flagship at her moorings to learn to be idle and worthless; sending, in lieu of them, a parcel of jail-birds and raw hands, to make those



THE *ALERT'S* TATTERED BLUE ENSIGN AND THE RED ENSIGN OF THE *GOVERNOR HUNTER*

among whom they were going nearly as bad as themselves."

The *Alert,* commanded by Capt. Thomas Lamb Poulden Laugharne, was jogging her uncertain way along the North Atlantic on August 13, 1812, when she discovered a larger ship to leeward, with reefed sails. The *Alert* herself was ship-rigged (that is to say, she had three masts and square sails on each), and she rated as a sloop-of-war, but she was not larger than the tubby brigs of the period, nor was she as handy.

The stranger to leeward appeared to be a merchantman, snugged down for comfortable handling by a small crew. In reality she was the American frigate *Essex,* destined to do more damage as a commerce destroyer than many of her larger sisters in the American navy; destined, also, to fall into British hands after a stand-up fight. The *Essex* was commanded by Capt. David Porter, one of the most resourceful men in the service of the United States.

Seeing the British vessel to windward, Capt. Porter simulated the appearance of a frightened merchantman to perfection. He sent a few men aloft to shake out the reefs, apparently in desperate hurry. At the same time he lowered weighted drags of wood and canvas over the sides and steered off before the wind, the ship making much commotion, but little progress. He closed all his gun-ports, and kept the tompions, or muzzle-plugs, in his guns. Thus his armament could not be discovered until the *Alert* was close up.

The gullible sloop stood down to within easy range and fired a shot across the *Essex's* bows. The latter, still pretending to be a frightened merchantman, obediently hove to. The *Alert* ran under her stern to



THE *ALERT'S* TATTERED BLUE ENSIGN, in its case in the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.

prevent her making off while a boat was being lowered for the usual formality of taking possession of the prize. As the port-lids clanged down and the *Essex's* forty tompion-stopped cannon grinned, and her 328 men lined the bulwarks, the *Alert* discovered her predicament. She was in the grasp of an armed enemy of four times her strength in men and four times her force in guns.

There was something like panic on board. The crew ran aft and begged Capt. Laugharne to haul down his colors.

Two men refused to join the mob—William Haggarty, the purser, and Johanson Clering, the (supposedly Danish) sailing master. "Fight!" said they. But the first lieutenant, Andrew Duncan, gave his captain no support.

"To your guns, men," thundered Capt. Laugharne, "and, sail-trimmers, stand by tacks and sheets!"

The *Alert* ranged up on the *Essex's* lee quarter and fired a broadside. It was a harmless explosion, for in anticipation of merely having a merchantman to overawe, the eight guns on this side, were only loaded with light charges of grape and cannister shot. The aim was bad and the position poor.

The *Alert* was so far abaft the beam of the *Essex* that none of her shots went into the open ports. The solid sides and bulwarks of the American ship defied their entry elsewhere.

Somewhat surprised at this broadside—like the lunge of a frightened boxer who strikes because he cannot await his opponent's blow—the stationary *Essex* cut adrift her drags, filled away, and fired her broadside gun by gun as each piece bore, blowing the tompions out of the muzzles with the discharges.

The *Alert* reeled under the crash of the 32-pound shot as though struck by a squall. She stood off before the wind, settling lower in the water with every wallow.

At the end of eight minutes the *Essex* was fairly abreast of the *Alert* and threatening to blow her out of the ocean with one broadside. A musket was fired to leeward in the British ship—the signal of surrender; and in a few moments Capt. David Porter had made a prize of the first British warship taken in the war.

The ex-coal carrier had had only three men wounded, but she had seven feet of water in the hold, and was going down when she surrendered. By dint of shot-plugs and the bucket work of three hundred men the *Alert* was kept afloat. She was of no use as a cruiser, so her sixteen short-range guns—18-pounder carronades—were taken out and she was sent to St. John's, Newfoundland, as a cartel, with British prisoners. Afterwards she was brought back to the New England coast and used as a block-ship, a rallying point from which small boat attacks could be repelled, when the British blockade was established.

Some of the prisoners were not glad to be returned to British soil. Lieut. Duncan was tried by court-martial and dismissed from the service. The other members of the crew, with the exception of the purser and master, were severely censured. The Admiralty probably recognized that the *Alert* could really neither fight nor run away from the *Essex*. Still there was no justification for wanting to strike the colors before the first shot was fired. When the reader comes to the story of the *Wasp* and the *Frolic* the merits of a last cartridge defence will be apparent.

Thus it comes that the *Alert's* ensign graces Mahan Hall, at the Annapolis Naval Academy; a pallid blue flag, looking rather ashamed of being so well preserved as it is.

MANY of the British naval flags held as trophies at Annapolis are, or were, red originally. Some were white, like the naval ensign of to-day, divided by a red St. George's Cross. A few others, the *Alert's* among them, were blue to begin with.

This, as has been explained before, is the survival of the old divisions of the British fleet under the Admiral of the White, the Admiral of the Blue, and the Admiral of the Red, the admirals ranking in the order named. Ships of the White Division wore the white ensign; ships of the Blue the blue, ships of the Red the red. All this was very confusing. Nelson is credited with making the white ensign universal at Trafalgar. But the old red and blue flags continued in use for half a century afterwards. Of the 23 British ensigns captured in the War of 1812 and held at Annapolis five are white, fourteen are red and four are blue. Of the pennants, the long ribbon like flags flown at the mast heads, one is blue, one red, white and blue, two are red and white, and three are red.

Of itself the *Alert's* ensign cannot qualify for fadeless fame. But it took all sorts of ships and sailors to make the navy in 1812. The ex-coal-hooker and her crew were not representative examples. But even in her were found two men, a Briton and a Dane, to back their captain up with "Strike the foe!" when all others cried, "Strike the flag."



BRITISH MERCHANT SHIPS *PURSUIT* (LEFT) AND *PLANTER* (RIGHT) attacked by the American privateer *Atlas* in mid-Atlantic, Aug. 5, 1812. Both ships were captured, with their valuable cargoes of West Indian goods, but the *Shannon* recaptured the *Planter* and the *Atlas* herself was taken by the boats of Sir Geo. Cockburn's squadron.—From an old American lithograph.

Before meeting the *Alert,* the *Essex* had already made one British capture, although this was not an armed vessel. In the darkness of early morning on July 11, 1812, she had nipped transport brig No. 299 from the convoy of seven vessels which the 32-gun frigate *Minerva* was escorting from Barbados to Quebec. The *Minerva* relinquished the pursuit lest she lose some of the six remaining troopships to other American vessels. Capt. Porter paroled the 197 soldiers on board the captured brig, took a cash ransom for the vessel from the officers, and sent her on her way after the convoy, with his report of having tried and failed to bring the *Minerva* to action.

By a curious coincidence, another *Minerva* appeared two months later in an incident which rather discounted the gallant but boastful Porter's reputation as a fire-eater. In the following September, Capt. Broke, of the *Shannon,* recaptured the British merchant ship *Planter,* which had been taken by the American privateer *Atlas* on August 5, 1812—(See the chapter on "Yankee Privateers"). The *Planter* was proceeding to an American port under a prize crew. After recapturing the *Planter* the *Shannon* sighted the *Essex,* convoying the American merchant ship *Minerva.* The *Essex* first bore down on the *Shannon* with the *Minerva* in company, and then put about. The *Shannon* chased the two of them from noon until dark. Coming up with the *Minerva,* she captured her. The *Essex* continued running and the *Shannon* stood by the *Planter* and the *Minerva* hoping the *Essex* would return to fight it out. There was too much sea running that night to make it safe to transfer the prisoners in

the dark. By morning, however, this was accomplished, and the *Minerva* was then set on fire; but even the spectacle of her convoy burning failed to bring the *Essex* back within range of the *Shannon's* guns.

XI

The End of the *Essex*

IT was blowing a brisk breeze on February 8, 1814, and the Yankee raider *Essex* pranced and curvetted behind her anchors in the neutral port of Valparaiso as though impatient to be off to sea again.

She had good reason for this impatience. For a year she had been ranging the South Pacific, taking part in native wars, preying upon British Indiamen and whalers, refitting from the prizes she made, and paying her crew out of the proceeds of their plunder. She had completely broken up the southern whaling trade.

Capt. David Porter, who commanded her, was a regularly commissioned officer of the United States navy, and his ship was a United States frigate from Salem, Mass.; but her career in the South Seas was as unrestricted as a pirate's, with the limitation that she attacked only natives and the British flag.

The *Essex's* particular incentive to be off to sea again was the sight of two British warships standing into the harbor.

Would they respect the neutrality of the Chilian port? That was the question which worried Capt. Porter. He knew British captains had a strict regard for laws. But he also knew that these ships had beaten around Cape Horn for the express purpose of capturing him. So his drums beat to quarters, the powder-boys were distributed with slowmatches for the guns,

the boarders were drawn up crouched under the bulwarks, cutlass in hand, ready to board through the smoke, should the ships touch.

Capt. Porter's pride was the prowess of his crew in hand-to-hand conflict. Every man of them was hard as nails, with two years fighting training behind him. Every man kept his cutlass sharp as a razor, and had a pistol, and a dirk made by the ship's armorer from a file, for boarding. They were exercised every day at the great guns, small arms, and singlestick.

The British ships were coming in close-hauled on a puffy headwind, and a flaw broke the leading vessel off her course until she pointed for the *Essex's* quarter. Hard down went her helm and she luffed up alongside the anchored American, ranging ahead till she was almost, but not quite, past her. Then another puff of the baffling wind made her canvas flail and thunder in its gear, and she lost headway and halted. Not a soul could be seen aboard her, for as in the *Essex,* every man was crouching at his post, out of the line of fire.

It was a crucial moment. Fifteen feet only separated peace and war. One shot and neutrality would be blown to bits. "Fire and board!" rose to Capt. Porter's lips but hesitated there.

Then above the hammock nettings of the British ship showed the silver hair of a captain of the old school. At the risk of being riddled by American muskets he had mounted a quarterdeck carronade, and with a sweep of his cocked hat he called:

"Capt. Porter, I believe? Captain James Hillyar, of his Britannic Majesty's ship *Phoebe,* has the honor to inquire after your health!"

It was a great relief to the raider. The British ship

might be taken at disadvantage by a heavier broadside poured in point blank, and followed with boarding-pike and cutlass; but well he knew the British would fight to the last man, and the second British ship would be up ere he could clear the gangways. Capt. Porter was however enough of a diplomat to conceal his satisfaction. He returned the inquiry as to health, and blustered:

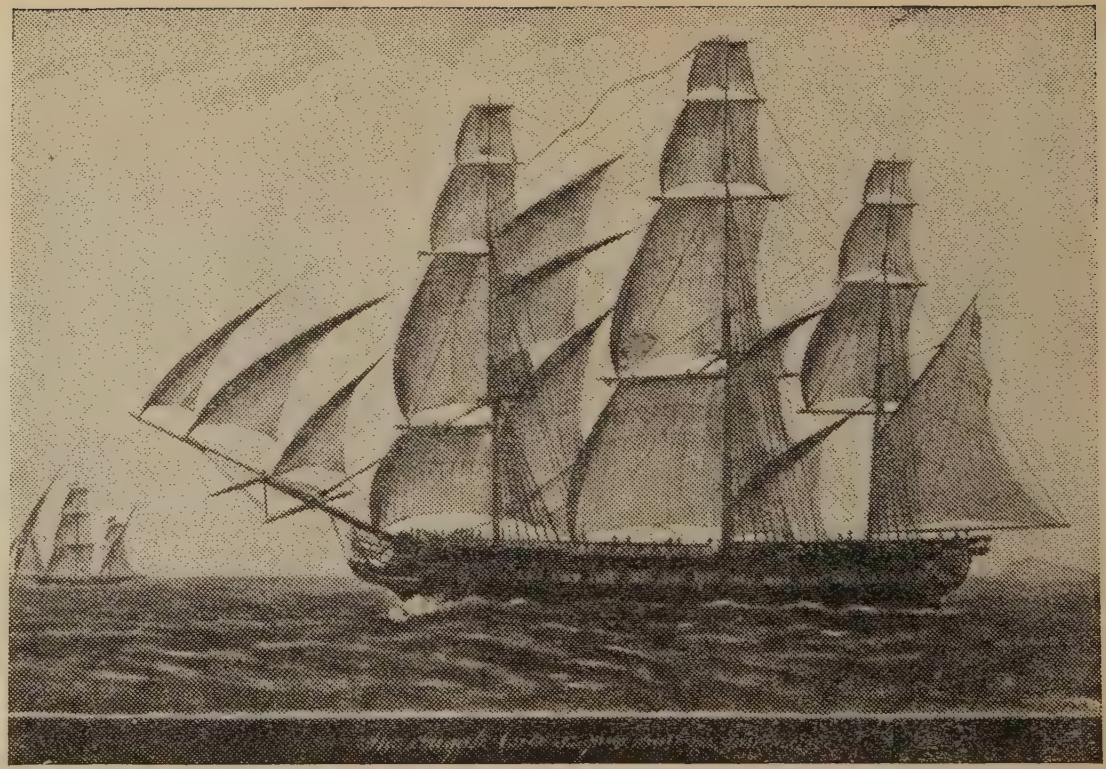
"Touch a ropeyarn of this ship and I board instantly!"

"We are all aback, and if we touch you it will be only by accident," hailed Hillyar. "We know that we are in a neutral harbor."

"You have no business to be where you are in that harbor," retorted Porter; but his voice had rather the ring of the man who would fight if he could only get someone to hold his coat.

Steady as a statue the old man on the gun-carriage conned his ship. Fathom by fathom she went astern, her yards passing over the *Essex* without touching brace or backstay. Half a mile away the *Phoebe* anchored with her consort, the sloop-of-war *Cherub*. Later the captains met ashore, and Porter received further assurance that Hillyar would respect Chilian neutrality.

THAT neutrality sheltered not only the *Essex* but British prizes she had taken and kept at anchor in the port! Capt. Porter had armed several captured vessels and spread them out for the further destruction of British commerce. One of these apprentice-raiders, renamed *Essex Junior,* lay beside him in Valparaiso, and was as formidable as the British sloop-of-war *Alert,* which the *Essex* had captured eighteen months before.



U.S. FRIGATE *ESSEX*.—From an old painting in the Marine Room, Peabody Institute, Salem, Mass. The *Essex* was built in Salem. From the curious rig of the small vessel shown in the offing—an Algerine xebec—it is to be supposed that the painting commemorates one of the Mediterranean cruises of the *Essex*, probably the Tripolitan campaign of 1804. There is some gorgeous detail in the original picture, among other things the port-lids being painted in gory red.

The *Cherub* was stronger than the *Essex Junior,* and weaker than the *Essex.* The *Essex* herself was also much heavier than the *Phoebe* at close range, but weaker at long range, on account of the nature of her armament. She could throw more metal at a broadside, but could not throw it so far.

James Hillyar of the *Phoebe* was no Lawrence, who sought to "Peacock" the *Shannon* for personal glory when his orders were to cut off troopships and supply-convoys. Capt. Hillyar's duty was to end a commerce destroyer, and he never lost sight of the fact.

For seven weeks the British ships played the game according to the rules of conduct in neutral waters. The *Phoebe* and the *Cherub* hovered off Valparaiso, sometimes in the harbor and sometimes outside, like cats at a rat hole. But the vigil was far from being silent on either side.

Capt. Porter, snugly at anchor, hoisted "FREE TRADE AND SAILORS' RIGHTS" at the foremast head.

Capt. Hillyar replied with a "St. George's ensign" —the white ensign of to-day, and the motto:

"GOD AND COUNTRY,
BRITISH SAILORS' BEST RIGHTS:
TRAITORS OFFEND BOTH."

To this the *Essex* crew replied by manning the rigging and giving three cheers. The *Phoebe's* crew swarmed aloft in turn and drowned them with cheers that sounded as the roaring of the sea off Cape Horn. So the *Essex* hoisted another flag at the mizzen:—

"GOD, OUR COUNTRY, AND LIBERTY:
TYRANTS OFFEND THEM."

On February 15th the *Essex Junior* was towed out of the harbor, but dodged back before the vigilant blockaders could nab her. On the 23rd the *Essex* herself stood out but turned back. On the 25th Capt. Porter had the British ship *Hector,* another of his prizes, towed out to sea and set on fire. The *Essex* had already burned the prizes *Catherine* and *Greenwich.* Here was exemplified the working of neutrality; Capt. Hillyar, sent out to end a commerce destroyer, had to watch while British commerce was burned in front of him in "neutral" waters!

On the evening of the 27th, when the *Phoebe* was hove-to off the harbor in a light breeze, and the *Cherub* was six miles away, and unable to reach her in less than an hour, the *Essex* and *Essex Junior* sailed out, in the hope of finishing the two vessels separately.

Capt. Hillyar cared so little for appearances that he promptly spread his studding-sails and ran away, to get the *Cherub's* support before engaging. "The American officers," says an historian, were "intensely irritated over this, and returned to port." They continued to rely upon neutrality, while the British ships were together, and upon gunnery when they could catch them apart!

The *Essex Junior* made another unsuccessful sally on March 3rd; and on March 27th. Capt. Porter decided to try a running fight of it, holding the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* as well as he could while the *Essex Junior* fled in the opposite directions. The two were to rendezvous at the Marquesas for another attack on British merchantmen. The little brushes had shown that neither British vessel possessed enough speed to catch the *Essex* once she got beyond gunshot.

After midnight the sky to leeward—the prevailing wind on the Chilian coast at that season was southerly—blazed for a long time with rockets and blue flares. Night and day were the same to the watchful British, and they ran northwards towards the display. They showed the private night signal, but there was no response. Concluding that the fireworks came from a Yankee decoy boat they hauled their wind and began beating back. Daylight showed both the *Essex* and *Essex Jr.* in port. They had not seized their opportunity.

THE afternoon of March 28th it blew very hard from the south-southeast, and the *Essex* parted her port cable and dragged her starboard anchor. At the time she was to windward of the blockading British vessels which were still beating back to their station after their wildgoose chase, so Capt. Porter suddenly determined to make his attempt. Single-reefing his topsails he stood out of the harbor, the water fairly boiling under the *Essex's* forefoot as she fled for the open sea. When she rounded the westerly and outermost point of the bay a squall struck her and hove her down till she buried her quarterdeck guns.

Something had to go—either the ship or her gear—and just when it seemed that the *Essex* was beyond righting, her maintopmast snapped and relieved her of the pressure of her largest topsail.

Knowing he could never race thus Capt. Porter wore ship and tried to haul up for the neutral harbor, which had been such a haven indeed. But the wind would have none of that; the *Essex* could not look up to her course with the wreck of tophamper bellying off like a tattered balloon, so she turned away before the

gale again and ran into a small bay, three miles from Valparaiso, and a mile east of Point Caleta. Here, head-reaching in against the squalls which came obliquely offshore, the *Essex* anchored—half a mile from the land, and therefore well within the three-mile limit over which she expected neutrality to extend its protection.

Capt. Hillyar of H.M.S. *Phoebe* had no hallucinations about the obligation of respecting neutrality. American writers, including the usually unprejudiced Roosevelt, have felt very bitterly over what he did. "When Porter decided to anchor near shore, in neutral water," says Roosevelt, "he could not anticipate Hillyar's deliberate and treacherous breach of faith." In other words, Hillyar should have politely run down and again inquired regarding the health of the raider who had burned British vessels before his eyes in neutral waters, and was now trying to escape and continue the ravage of British commerce. Porter's own retort: "You have no business to be where you are," might well have been returned to him. He regarded neutral waters as proper for him to destroy British commerce in; or to fight in when he had the advantage of larger force, windward position and his enemies divided; or to escape in, when he had the apparent opportunity; but not for Hillyar to capture him in!

Hillyar would have been false to his duty if he had given Porter a third chance. He went about the ending of the commerce-destroyer as methodically and mechanically as he holystoned his decks every morning. The one touch of color in his work was his reply to the *Essex,* before the combat began, with ensign for ensign, jack for jack, and motto-flag for motto-flag.

The *Essex* had motto-flags at the fore and mizzen and ensigns at the mizzen peak and in the rigging of her shortened mainmast. The *Phoebe* was a dull sailer to windward, and Capt. Hillyar tacked back and forth astern of the *Essex,* firing broadsides, but not getting close enough to put in a finishing stroke. Three times the springs on the *Essex's* cable were shot away, and she was hulled again and again.

Springs are ropes led to different parts of a ship to be hauled on to change her position when she lies at anchor; highly necessary, in order to bring her broadside to bear. Had the *Essex's* springs been bent to the ring of her anchor before it was dropped, they would not have been so exposed to gunfire as they were through being bent on to the cable above water.

The *Essex* was formidable enough when fighting ex-colliers like the little old *Alert,* or South Sea whalers; but as she was chiefly armed with short-range carronades she had but an indifferent defence when pitted against the long-guns of a capable frigate and sloop.

Yet Capt. Porter fought bravely and well. He brought three long-guns back to his stern-ports, peppered the poor *Cherub* harder than she could stand, and slashed the *Phoebe's* sails and rigging until that ship could not get to windward at all.

"At 4.30, having lost the use of mainsail and jib, and fore, main and mizzen stays, appearances looked a little inauspicious," wrote the moderate Hillyar afterwards. So he drifted off, repaired damages, came back, and at 5 o'clock anchored off the *Essex's* port quarter and began firing broadsides from his starboard guns. The sloop *Cherub,* by his orders, plied

back and forth, beyond carronade-range, hulling the raider with her long-guns.

Capt. Porter's situation was now critical. The American Commodore David Farragut was a midshipman in the *Essex* in this engagement, and he has left a vivid picture of the battle. The *Essex's* decks looked like a shambles. One gun, manned three times, had fifteen men killed at it; and only the gun captain of the thirty men who worked it at different times, escaped unhurt. Many of the wounded dragged themselves back to work the guns. Some were killed by splinters as cannonshot burst into the room where the surgeons dressed their hurts. Others died waiting their turn for attention.

Four men at one gun were killed by a glancing shot, which spattered the brains of the last man over the bodies of his mangled comrades.

Two lieutenants were knocked overboard by splinters. Lieut. Wilmer was drowned in this way. His negro boy, Ruff, leaped after him, and was drowned with him. Lieut. Odenheimer, who was also knocked overboard, regained the ship.

A young Scotchman named Bissley, whose leg had been shot away, used his handkerchief as a tourniquet. "I left my own country and adopted the United States. I am no longer of any use to you or to her. Good-bye!" he cried, and dropped from a port-sill into the sea and perished.

Lieut J. G. Cowell, with a leg shot off above the knee, died at his post through loss of blood.

"Fair play's a jewel, doctor," he said when the surgeon tried to treat him earlier than others in the line of wounded men. "One man's life is as dear as

another's. I would not cheat any poor fellow of his turn." There were heroes and gallant souls on both sides in the War of 1812.

LIEUTENANT Downes, commanding the *Essex Junior,* pulled around from the harbor in a boat with three men. All four realized that the *Essex* was doomed, but an old boatswain's mate named Kingsbury, and the two other men voluntarily remained to sink with their old ship, while Lieut. Downes pulled back through the cannonade with his boat loaded to the gunwale with wounded.

Three times flames burst from the *Essex's* hatches. Mangled men, seared and bleeding, and with their clothes all aflame, rushed up from the lower deck and plunged into the sea.

"One man," says Farragut, "swam ashore with scarcely a square inch of his body which had not been burned; and although he was deranged for some days he ultimately recovered."

Twenty-five men swam ashore from the *Essex.* One of these had eighteen scales, or splinters, from the muzzle of a burst gun in his legs.

Farragut himself, while going below for gun-primers, was knocked down the hatch by the body of the captain of a gun, who had been struck full in the face by an eighteen-pound shot. Later an eighteen-pound shot, coming over the foreyard, cut off Farragut's coat tail, as he stood by old Francis Bland, a quartermaster, at the wheel. The same shot took off Bland's right leg, and the old man died for lack of a tourniquet, while waiting his turn among the rows and rows of wounded.

Brandy by the bucketful stood between the guns, and added to the chaos below decks. Men who were not crazed by burns and wounds were fighting drunk.

Capt. Porter was knocked down by the windage of a passing shot, but regained his feet unhurt. His reputation as a merciful man is not of the highest, and he saw one of his sailors, William Roach by name, flinching from his station. He sent a midshipman after him to pistol him. The wretch hid, and the midshipman was in no haste to find him. But one William Call, whose shattered leg was held to his body only by the skin, crawled around and around the baghouse, where the men stowed their belongings, trying to get a shot at the skulker.

After twenty minutes' pounding Capt. Porter cut his cable and attempted to fling the *Essex* on the *Phoebe* and carry her by boarding. Only one set of ropes remained uncut in the ship—the flying-jib halliards. Hoisting that sail, and letting the remnants of his foresail and topsail blow from their yards, he steered for the *Phoebe,* with every carronade blazing at the British ships.

"The firing on both sides," Capt. Porter wrote afterwards, "was now tremendous." "A serious conflict," the sober Hillyar recorded it.

There was great glory to be won, carrying the *Essex,* sword in hand, in a boarding battle, as Broke did the *Chesapeake.* But Hillyar was not out for glory, but for the sure completion of his job; so he slipped his anchor and stood away out of carronade range, plying the *Essex* with his long-guns as he went.

The wind was either dying with the day or weakening from the heavy cannonade. The *Essex* had

hardly steerage way. Seeing the impossibility of fighting his ship free Capt. Porter tried to run the *Essex* ashore and burn her. He headed for the beach; and the dogged Hillyar followed him.

Within three hundred yards of the bluffs the wind shifted, and blew sharply offshore in an expiring gust. This paid the *Essex's* head off toward the *Phoebe* again. To avoid closing with her Capt. Porter let go his sheet anchor and fired his whole broadside as the swinging ship pointed her guns to the enemy for the last time.

"Never say die while there's a shot in the locker," is a good old sea motto. It looked as though it was being vindicated now. This last desperate salvo from the *Essex* splintered both the main and mizzen masts of the *Phoebe,* and her mainyard, so that she was again for the time being unable to get to windward; and the little *Cherub,* a worse slug than the *Phoebe* in windward work, had been hit very hard by an earlier carronade broadside and forced to haul off, with her captain badly wounded.

Would the British bulldogs drop to leeward so far and so fast that night and neutrality would finally save the American ship?

That was the question in the mind of Capt. Hillyar, and the hope in the breast of Capt. Porter.

Just as the *Phoebe* drifted out of range Hillyar fired all of the 23 guns which comprised one broadside.

One shot of the twenty-three decided the battle.

It cut the *Essex's* last hawser. She again drifted helplessly towards the *Phoebe* and the returning *Cherub.*

"If anyone thinks he can swim ashore let him jump!" cried Capt. Porter to his crew.

The British boats which came alongside as the mot-to-flags and ensigns descended from the *Essex's* spars picked up sixteen men struggling in the water. Thirty-one were drowned.

Of two hundred and fifty-five who sailed out of Valparaiso in the *Essex* twenty-three were found dead on board of her by the British victors. Fifty-eight in all were killed or drowned, sixty-five were wounded. A stubborn and gallant defence, which did Capt. Porter and his crew credit; but more credit still is due the cool-headed, lion-hearted Capt. Hillyar, and his able second, Capt. Thomas Tudor Tucker, who put an end to this commerce-destroyer.

Their non-spectacular workmanlike tactics accomplished the task with the loss of four men killed and seven wounded in the *Phoebe,* and one man killed and three wounded in the *Cherub;* the most satisfactory feature of the whole performance, and one fitting well with Capt. Hillyar's despatch:

"It pleased the Almighty Disposer of events to bless the efforts of my gallant companions, and my personal, very humble ones, with victory."

HARD work, not heroics, a policeman's arrest of a burglar, was the task of the *Phoebe* and the *Cherub.* They had the heavier hands, the *Essex* the nimbler heels, although she was never counted very fast. The *Essex* had 255 men and six long 12-pounder guns and thirty-four 32-pounder carronades; forty guns throwing a broadside of 614 pounds, of limited range. That is her armament according to American historians. James, the British historian, who was very much alive at the time she was captured, says she had forty-six guns, and a broadside of 676 pounds. In any

event she could throw, at close range, much more metal than the *Phoebe,* but not as much as the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* combined. The *Essex Junior,* a potential but not actual participant in the conflict, had ninety-five men and twenty guns, throwing 120 pounds in broadside.

The *Phoebe* had 278 men and 22 boys, and forty-six guns, throwing a broadside of 499 pounds. Half of this was from long 12-pounders and 18-pounders, the proper equipment for a vessel that might have to do much long-range fighting before she should bring her quarry to bay. The *Cherub* had 180 men and boys, and twenty-four guns, with a broadside of 342 pounds, nearly all in short-range carronade metal, like the *Essex.* She had only two long guns, and they were 9-pounders.

The praises of Porter and the *Essex* as successful raiders have often been sung, but in actual accomplishment they do not rank with the exploits of the *Constitution* in the same war, or of the *Alabama* fifty years later, or of the *Emden* a century afterwards.

The *Essex's* best individual capture was the packet *Nocton,* with $55,000 in specie. The *Nocton* herself, and the *Essex's* lieutenant who was in her, Mr. Finch, and his prize crew of seventeen, were captured by the British on the way home.

The *Georgiana,* a British whaler captured by the *Essex,* was fitted with 16 guns and a crew of forty men by Capt. Porter, and started home with $100,000 worth of spermaceti oil. She was recaptured on the way by H.M.S. *Barrosa* in the West Indies.

The *Policy,* another oil-laden whaler, which the

Essex was sending home, was recaptured by H.M.S. *Loire;* the *New Zealander* by H.M.S. *Belvidera.*

Two more prizes, the *Rose* and the *Charlton,* the *Essex* had to part with as cartels, in which she got rid of the four hundred whaling sailors she had captured.

These vessels were sent on long voyages to neutral ports by their captor, with their rigs so mutilated and reduced by the cutting of masts etc., that they might have foundered or run ashore or their crowded passengers might have perished of starvation or thirst.

The *Montezuma,* another prize which lay in Valparaiso when the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* came there, was sold.

The *Sir Andrew Hammond* was recaptured by the *Cherub.* The *Atlantic,* which had been fitted out as a raider under the name *Essex Junior,* was captured by the *Phoebe,* and filled with American prisoners.

The *Seringapatam,* which had been captured by the converted prize *Greenwich* for the *Essex,* was seized by mutineers in her American prize crew, taken to New Zealand, and delivered up to her rightful owners for salvage. The *Hector,* captured by an American crew in the converted prize *Georgiana,* after a fight in which the British ship had two men killed and six wounded, was burned at sea, like the *Catherine* and the *Greenwich,* these three prizes netting their captors nothing.

And to complete the tale the *Essex* herself became a British prize, and was brought triumphantly into Plymouth Sound, November 13th, 1814! She had been built by popular subscription at Salem, in 1799, Essex County, Massachusets, contributing the name and the bulk of the expense of her building.

The commission-pennants and the fighting flags of the *Phoebe* and of the *Cherub* are worthy of a proud place in any Hall of Fame, commemorating a hard task well done. No one knows what has become of them, or of the motto-flags and ensigns of the captured *Essex*. If they were kept at all they have been forgotten, in the splendid carelessness about such tangible emblems of triumph which is the glory of the British race. But the record of the *Essex* of 1814, like the record of the *Emden* of 1914, is written imperishably on the credit side of the ledger of the greatest asset, under God, civilization possesses—THE BRITISH NAVY.

XII

Two *Frolics*

FOR a long time there stretched across the ceiling of the Academic Building in the United States Naval Academy, a red ensign, identified by its inscription as that of the

> "British brig *Frolic,* Capt. Thomas Whinyates. Captured by the United States sloop *Wasp,* Master Commandant Jacob Jones."

It is in the collection of naval trophies yet, a split and punctured piece of bunting 19 feet 9 inches long by 10 feet wide. Judged by the standards of to-day, 'tis an ill-designed British flag, the red part being two and a half times as deep as that occupied by the Union Jack whereas modern practice employs a union one half the depth of the field. The Jack itself is so constructed that the St. Andrew's Cross and so-called St. Patrick's Cross are flattened out into thick, almost straight bars, so heavy that the blue of the Jack is crowded down into very thin and very long wedges.

In design the flag is no worse than some other examples from the navy of 1812, and its threadbare and decayed appearance, especially in the upper half, is indication of a century of age. But how the flag, if it was originally the *Frolic's* ensign, ever reached Annapolis is a question which invites explanation.

The story of the *Frolic* is one which should thrill every British heart with pride. She was just an ordinary brig of the British navy, like the brave *Rein-*

deer or the efficient *Pelican.* She measured 380 tons, and had sixteen 32-pounder carronades, two six-pounder long guns and a dismantled 12-pounder carronade; giving her eighteen working guns and an actual broadside of 262 pounds.

Her crew numbered 110. Five years' fighting the French and chasing picaroons on the West Indian station had thinned their ranks and reduced their strength, even as it had bleached the brig's sails and shrivelled her planking. Ship and crew were due for a complete rest and renovation, and early in 1812 they hailed with joy the news that they were to accompany a convoy that was gathering in the Bay of Honduras for England.

In Havana Capt. Whinyates heard for the first time of the war which had been declared by America weeks before. Nevertheless he proceeded to Honduras and gathered his convoy of fourteen vessels together; and on the twelfth of September they weighed the anchors which they hoped would never leave the cat-heads till Plymouth Sound or the Downs should be under the forefoot.

It was not speedy voyaging north, at the pace of the slowest freighters loaded deep with cargoes of sugar and logwood and mahogany and rum, and a month elapsed before they got above Hatteras. On the 15th of October they passed a Spanish brig-of-war with some merchantmen under her protection. On the 16th it blew a gale of wind.

The convoy was separated, according to the weatherliness of the various vessels. The *Frolic,* in her worn-out state, suffered more than her charges, losing her mainyard and having both topsails blown to rib-

bons. Her fore topmast had been sprung, or cracked, previously, and this gale also sprung the maintopmast, leaving her incapable of carrying sail aloft.

The weather moderated the following day, and the *Frolic* remained hove-to under storm canvas, repairing her damages and waiting for the convoy to rejoin. The broken mainyard was laid out on casks on deck for "fishing," the operation similar to binding with surgeon's splints; a new foretopsail was got aloft. By dark six of the missing flock had reported, and a seventh sail was in sight far to the northward. The day's observation showed that the ship was in latitude 37 north and longitude 65 west, about 450 miles east of Chesapeake Bay.

Morning of the 18th of October broke bright and cloudless, with the wind still blowing strong and the ocean running in great folds of blue, capped with brilliant masses of foam. The seventh sail had not risen much above the horizon; but daylight showed her filling away under close-reefed topsails and steering so as to cut off the convoy; manifestly, an enemy, and a powerful enemy.

Capt. Whinyates, of the *Frolic,* might have played the poltroon and abandoned his charge. By putting his worn-out brig before the wind, jettisoning guns, boats and stores, and crowding all the canvas his crippled spars could bear, he might have effected his own vessel's salvation. Or he might have tamely hauled down his flag after firing a formal broadside, with the plausible excuse that the condition of his ship made successful resistance ultimately impossible. But the bull-dog grit of the British race made such a course unthinkable. In 1812 it was as impossible for a con-

voy ship to desert her charges as it was when the *Mary Rose* went down in the North Sea one hundred and five years later, saving a convoy of Scandinavian neutrals from German assassins.

On the stricken field of Albuera, in 1811, Col. Inglis, of the 57th West Middlesex Regiment of Foot, cried, "Die hard, men, die hard!" And his men did die hard. The cry reverberates yet where British hearts beat. The crew of the *Frolic,* cut off from England by their long West Indian exile, may not have known the wording of the call which had thrilled the rest of their world. But never has it had nobler answer —nor, in results, more satisfactory vindication and recompense—than in the response of that fever-frayed, tropic-smitten crew of Britons in the North Atlantic on October 18, 1812.

In the *Frolic's* condition any defence was a forlorn hope. Capt. Whinyates first tried stratagem. He remembered the Spanish vessels they had passed, and which the enemy might have seen. Ordering his convoy to steer for the eastward under all sail they could bear, he hoisted Spanish colors and hauled the *Frolic* on the wind, under close-reefed foretopsail and boom-mainsail. The mainyard was got down from its casks and lashed on deck, between the rows of guns. The traversing carronade had been dismantled and was also lashed to the deck.

The oncoming vessel was a ship, that is, she had three square-rigged masts to the *Frolic's* two. She was the U.S. sloop-of-war *Wasp,* the first of that name, of 450 tons and twenty guns—sixteen 32-pounder carronades, like the *Frolic's,* two twelve-pounders and two fours, giving her a broadside of 272 pounds. Her

decided advantage was in the strength of her crew—137 men in good health—and in her condition. The *Frolic* with her 110 men and boys had been five years out from England, but the *Wasp* was only five days out from the Delaware Capes. The storm of the 16th had carried away her jibboom, but that spar was not needed in the strong breeze now blowing.

The *Wasp* had sighted the convoy just before midnight, and had hove to until morning. She made it very plain that she was not deceived by the Spanish colors, for she hoisted the Stars and Stripes and ran out her guns, keeping the weather berth on the laboring *Frolic*. Capt. Whinyates, having made his attempt at stratagem, hauled down the crimson-and-gold of Spain and sent up in its place the meteor flag of England.

The courses of the two ships were such that they came together at an acute angle, both having the wind about abeam. So high was the sea that they leaped under their shortened canvas until they showed great areas of the copper sheathing of their under-bodies,—the *Wasp's* glistening bright, the *Frolic's* foul with weeds—and they plunged till the brine spurted through the open gun-ports.

Clouds of spray burst in rainbows and snowdrifts from the storming bows, drenching the crouching crews, as the ships, in the expressive phrase of Roosevelt, wallowed through the blue water. The vessels were "beam and beam" as the nautical term goes—abreast of one another—and not more than sixty yards apart when the battle began, at 11.32 a.m.

The *Frolic* fired first, her crew cheering lustily and delivering broadside after broadside as fast as they

FLAG IDENTIFIED AS THAT OF THE *FROLIC*, in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. How it came there is a puzzle to historians, as the *Frolic* was only in American hands for one hundred minutes on the high seas and her captors were themselves captured.

could load. Loud American cheers and loud American broadsides were the answer, but the British fired three times while the Americans fired twice. In the strong sunlight of the October noon the cheering crews, the rolling smoke, the long pennants of red and white and blue streaming above the almost naked masts, the black hulls rearing and plunging, the bright ensigns flailing the roaring breeze, the cannon mouths scooping up the salt sea, made a battle picture Vandervelde should have lived to paint.

The Americans fired as the *Wasp* rolled down, even when she dipped her gun-muzzles under. The British fired as the *Frolic* rolled up, striving to dismantle their opponent by their high aim. Two men were killed in the *Wasp's* mizzen top, two more in the maintopmast rigging, and five more were wounded while aloft. The *Frolic* shot away the *Wasp's* maintopmast and topsail yard, her mizzen topgallantmast and her spanker gaff—the maintopmast falling into the head-braces. The battle might have gone well with the *Frolic,* despite her infirmities, but after four minutes of firing the *Wasp's* third broadside brought down the boom mainsail, leaving the *Frolic* with no after canvas whatever to keep her up to the wind. Still the British sailors cheered and fired, though the slaughter from the American carronades, pointed low, at sixty yards distance, was terrible.

The ships sagged together, the *Wasp* temporarily unmanageable, through the wreck of spars and sails fallen into her head-rigging; the *Frolic* unable to keep or increase her distance, owing to lack of sail. After twenty minutes of fighting as they ran abreast they came so close that with each roll the gun-mouths struck

the opposing planking, and the men fought each other with rammers and sponges, fending off the opposite vessel so as to run their guns out before pulling the lock-strings. Sometimes they fired squarely into the enemy's ports.

The *Wasp* having more sail—two of her three topsails were intact—travelled faster and ranged ahead. She swung short across the *Frolic's* course. The latter's bowsprit lunged over the *Wasp's* quarter-deck, coming in over the heads of Capt. Jones and his first lieutenant, Mr. Biddle, as they stood by the capstan.

Next instant, with a crash, the *Frolic's* bows struck the *Wasp's* side, and the two vessels ground and gnashed upon one another in the rough sea as though they were living things, animated by the battle-fury of their crews.

The *Frolic* had bridle-ports, square openings cut in her bulwarks in either bow, through which her chase guns could be pointed forward. The *Wasp* so lay that two of her 32-pounder carronades protruded directly into these open ports. They were fired, and their iron hail of canister shot sprayed the deck of the rearing, plunging, grinding *Frolic* from one end to the other.

Jack Lang, a New Jersey seaman of the *Wasp*—claimed, apparently on unsound grounds, by the British as a deserter—caught the *Frolic's* bowsprit as she settled in a trough and scrambled on to it. He waved his arm as a signal to cease fire. But Capt. Jones, of the *Wasp,* called him back and poured another salvo from the terrible guns into the enemy's deck. Then Lieut. Biddle, the *Wasp's* first, caught the bowsprit. His feet became entangled in the hammock-netting as he clambered, and one of the *Wasp's* midshipmen

named Baker, with all of a midshipmite's daring, caught at his coat tails to help himself up. He pulled his superior over, and both fell to the deck. With the next swell Lieut. George William Rodgers, the *Wasp's* second, gained the bowsprit and, closely followed by Biddle and the other boarders, scrambled down on to the *Frolic's* forecastle. What they saw justified Jack Lang's signal.

Of the ninety-two men and eighteen boys whom the *Frolic* had carried into action, only three were standing up.

A white-haired seaman clutched the spokes of the almost useless wheel. Capt. Whinyates, sore wounded, stood beside him, leaning on Frederick Boughton Wintle, the *Frolic's* second lieutenant, who was also wounded. The first lieutenant, Charles McKay, had been killed. The sailing master, John Stephens, had been killed. Dead and wounded lay in tangled heaps in the spaces between the guns.

All of the ship's company of one hundred and ten had either been mangled by the barrage of canister bullets or mowed down by the shot of the great guns—with the exception of the surgeon and his mates, and the few unwounded men who were at the moment of the boarding carrying their maimed comrades below.

The *Wasp's* first lieutenant rushed to the *Frolic's* signal halliards, tore down her ensign, and accepted Capt. Whinyates' sword at 12.15, forty-three minutes after the battle began.

Ere the flag and weapon could be carried to the commander of the *Wasp,* the *Frolic's* masts snapped off and rolled over the side as if in protest at the surrender. The mainmast went short at the deck, the

foremast left a jagged stump fifteen feet high. To this jagged stump the Stars and Stripes were quickly lashed, the hulk of the *Frolic* was fended off and dropped astern of the *Wasp,* and the work of clearing the deck of dead and injured began.

AS they were carried down the hatchways by the victorious Americans the wounded men of the captured British brig saw a sight which cheered them wonderfully. The tall spars of a "seventy-four," a brave line-of-battleship before which no sloop or frigate could stand, were lifting above the notched sea-line. Like Britannia herself rushing to the rescue of her sons, on she came, the whip-lash pennant streaming from the main, the cross of St. George at her peak, two tiers of guns showing as she hurdled the crests of the bounding billows.

"It's the old *Poictiers,* boys; no Yankee bilboes will ever hold US!" shouted the last man carried down. He coughed, and the blood from a bullet-torn lung gushed from his lips. He could not join in the cheer the others raised, but he weakly waved his hands.

The prize crew left on the *Frolic's* deck viewed the swiftly approaching ship with different feelings. They saw their own vessel shaking out her reefs, sheeting home her courses, mastheading her shot-torn topsails, and squaring away, leaving them to their fate. "Boom!" spoke a bowchaser from the big two-decker, and a shot flew high over the Stars and Stripes that fluttered from the stump of the *Frolic's* foremast.

The prize-crew took the hint and hauled the offending bunting down. The *Poictiers* swept by, leaving the poor brig rolling in the trough like a cripple in the gutter. The seventy-four was sailing three feet to

the *Wasp's* two, and was plumping fresh shot through her ragged sails in a few minutes. Without more ado the *Wasp* hauled down her colors, and at 2 p.m., one hour and three-quarters after it had been lowered, the British flag was again flying over the battered *Frolic,* matched by another bright British ensign over her late tormentor, the *Wasp.*

How, then, did the *Frolic's* flag ever get to Annapolis, Md., as a United States Naval Academy trophy?

The subsequent history of the vessels concerned does not readily give the answer. Capt. John Poer Beresford, of H.M.S. *Poictiers,* took the captured *Wasp* and recaptured *Frolic* into Bermuda. The prize was added to the British navy, and her crew were exchanged as prisoners of war.

If the Admiralty had had any regard for the fitness of things they would have either left the prize named the *Wasp,* or they would have renamed her, and very justly, the *Whinyates.* But with that passion for using French names in commemoration of ships captured from the ancient enemy, the Admiralty rechristened her *Loup Cervier* ("*Lynx*"). She was lost at sea with all hands in 1814, when commanded by Capt. William Bowen Mends.

History has, apparently, done scanty justice to the sacrifice of the *Frolic.* Commonly accepted report placed the British dead at fifteen and the wounded at forty-seven, two dying later; but these figures, although accounting for 56 per cent. of the *Frolic's* total crew, understate their sacrifice. Capt. Whinyates' own letter gives the *Frolic's* casualties as ninety killed and wounded; ninety out of one hundred and ten!

The casualties of the *Wasp* were, at the most, eight killed and eight wounded, the small number being due less to lack of skill on the part of the *Frolic's* gunners than to the fact that the British fire was directed to disabling the American ship's spars. The *Frolic* had no hope of capturing the *Wasp,* but she had a fighting chance of escaping from her enemy by crippling her.

Feeling ran high over the brief hour—or hour and three-quarters—of triumph enjoyed by the *Wasp's* crew over the brave and unfortunate vessel which had saved her convoy and brought about the *Wasp's* capture at such terrible cost to herself. The American Congress thought so much of the victory that they voted Master Commandant Jacob Jones and his crew $25,000 prize money, and when they were exchanged Capt. Jones was promoted to the captured *Macedonian*—which never got out of port—and Lieut. Biddle to Lawrence's old ship, the *Hornet.* Lieut. Biddle challenged Capt. Mends, of the renamed *Wasp,* to settle the superiority of the two sloops-of-war by a duel; but although there was considerable correspondence the *Wasp,* or *Loup Cervier,* was lost before the ships could meet.

The Americans replaced the first *Wasp* by a second sloop-of-war of the same name, a very successful vessel; but these two ships of the same original name and under different flags both foundered at sea in the same year.

The Americans also built a sister ship of the second *Wasp* and called her after the British brig they had held for so short a time. The American *Frolic's* fate completed the British *Frolic's* revenge or recompense.

She was the first of the new heavy sloops—the equals, almost, of British frigates—to go to sea. She was built in Boston, costing $72,094.82, and was of 509 tons, 22 guns, and had 160 men. She went out in February, 1814, under Master Commandant Joseph Bainbridge, brother of the captor of the *Java*. Her first encounter was with a large South American privateer schooner hailing from Cartagena. The privateer refused to heave-to when overhauled. Bainbridge gave her one broadside and sank her, drowning one hundred of her crew.

Bainbridge is said to have been the principal once in a duel of a particularly cold-blooded character. It was when Commodore Preble had the American fleet in the Mediterranean, making war on Tripoli. Joseph Bainbridge and Stephen Decatur were then young lieutenants. In a theatre in Malta Bainbridge was jostled by a British officer, secretary to the governor. The two countries were at peace, but it was an armed neutrality, not the peace of goodwill which has been the happy product of the ensuing century. The young American felt that the honor of his country demanded resentment of the supposed insult, and a duel was the outcome.

Bainbridge, who had no experience in fighting, sought the advice of Decatur, who had already fought one duel and was fated to lose his life in another. Decatur, as his second, was chosen to give the word to fire. He warned his principal his only hope was in firing low.

At the first discharge of the pistols the Englishman's ball went through Bainbridge's hat. Bainbridge's ball went over his opponent's head. The two duellists

stood with outstretched arms, aiming at one another for the second volley. Decatur held back the fatal word till the Englishman's hand trembled with the muscular tension. Then he called "Fire!" and Bainbridge's bullet went through the unfortunate officer's brain.

BEFORE daylight on April 20, 1814, on the coast of Florida, the American *Frolic* fell in with the British 18-pounder frigate *Orpheus,* Capt. Hugh Pigot, a 36-rate, and the twelve-gun schooner *Shelburne.* The latter was formerly the American privateer *Racer.* She had been captured with three other privateers in Chesapeake Bay by ships' boats from the British blockading squadron. Lieut. David Hope, one of the heroes of the *Macedonian,* commanded her after she was added to our navy.

Both British vessels were to leeward, and for thirteen hours the American *Frolic* beat to windward, trying to escape. She pumped out her drinking water to lighten herself and gain speed. She cut away her anchors, she threw overboard her boats, her spare spars, and tons and tons of shot. Still the British ships gained. Instead of using her armament to offer resistance while one plank held to another the American *Frolic* dropped her guns in flight. One by one they followed the other equipment to the bottom; and still the British ships gained.

The *Orpheus,* tacking, crossed the *Frolic's* wake. As she did so she threw two shots at her. They both fell short. But they decided Master Commandant Bainbridge. He hauled down his pennant and threw it overboard; not a noble way of preserving his flag. Then he hove his ship to in surrender. James, the

British naval historian, who seldom has anything good to say of Americans, declares that the prize, when boarded, looked like a town which had been given over to plunder; the purser's room, gun room, and even the captain's cabin were pillaged by the crew, for whom discipline was at an end.

Re-named the *Florida,* the American *Frolic* was added to the British navy—the second enemy craft secured, directly or indirectly, through the gallant sacrifices of the original bearer of the jaunty appellation.

When the odds are heavy and everything goes wrong, when surrender is so simple and to fight seems hopeless—think of the desperate defence of the British *Frolic,* and its outcome;—and "be British."

XIII

The *Macedonian*

'TWAS off the coast of Africa, a long way off the coast of Africa, in "twenty-nine north and twenty-nine-thirty west," on the morning of October 25, 1812, that H.M.S. *Macedonian* sighted a sail in the north-east.

The stranger was twelve miles away, a mere ruby pinpoint glowing with the first flush of the rising sun. The *Macedonian* was a small eighteen-pounder frigate, so-called because her main batteries threw balls of that weight. She classed as a 38-rate, and, including even the launch carronade, she boasted forty-nine guns. Two of her cannons, long-range brass eight-pounders, with scroll work on them, were the personal property of her commander, Capt. John Surnam Carden. She was a new ship, built of oak in 1810, and was fresh out from England after a refit; clean as a whistle, and fast. Her captain was proud of her; and in addition to the extra guns he had decorated her either at the break of the quarterdeck, or somewhere in the quarter-gallery, with the carven figure of a lion, with his paw on a ball. It may have signified the British lion with the world at his feet; it may have been only a figurehead carver's fancy. In any event, the wooden lion was as much a pet of the *Macedonian's* captain and crew as if he had been a tame bear or the ship's cat.

As soon as the *Macedonian* saw the stranger she spread every stitch of canvas she had, including top-

gallant studdingsails, and rushed to close with her, the south-southeast wind whisking her along through the water at a furious pace.

By 8.30 a.m. the two ships were within three miles of one another, and the character of both was evident. The stranger was the "waggon of the American navy," the frigate *United States;* so nicknamed, not because of clumsiness but from her tremendously thick sides. Her main batteries were 24-pounders, but she had 42-pounder carronades on deck as well, and taken altogether she was 50 per cent. heavier than the *Macedonian.* In the essential details the ships compared thus:—

Macedonian	*United States*
Guns—	
28 long 18's	30 long 24's
16 short 32's	22 short 42's
2 long 12's	2 long 32's
2 long 8's	2 long 12's
1 short 18	
Total—49 guns	Total—56 guns
Broadside weight—	
546 pounds.	866 pounds
Crews—	
262 men 35 boys	477 men, 1 boy
Tonnage—	
1,081 tons	1,576 tons

The *Macedonian* knew the *United States* thoroughly, for they had lain alongside in Chesapeake Bay in peace time the year before. The wise thing to do, and the right thing to do, on Capt. Carden's part, when

the decreasing distance made identification certain, was to haul the *Macedonian* on the wind and scamper away from the *United States* as fast as he had been approaching. There was no possibility of the eighteen-pounder whipping the twenty-four pounder. The *Guerriere* proved that, and Admiralty orders later forbade 18-pounder frigates seeking engagements with 24-pounders. There was no convoy to be saved by prolonged resistance, no prestige to be lost by keeping out of reach of the more powerful enemy and letting her wait to find a ship of her size.

Yet with the same courage which we admire in the bantam that attacks the turkey-cock, or the terrier that takes on a bull, Capt. Carden snapped his fingers at valor's better part and stood on.

They were sure of having the *United States* in an hour, those gallant British officers. Remember, they were young and brave, and as boys they had seen bigger Frenchmen and Spaniards beaten by smaller Britishers. They debated—the captain, the master, who worked the ship, and the first lieutenant—whether it would be better to pass her at a distance, turn around when out of the line of fire of her broadside, and come up from astern on the weather side—thus keeping the weather-gauge—or whether it would be better to run across her stern, raking her with one broadside and hauling up sharp, give her a "repeat" broadside at close range, as fast as the guns could be loaded.

That was the master's idea, and he was right—if it was right to close at all. The lieutenant had a plan to rake the *United States* by crossing her bows, then turn, and give her the undischarged broadside. While they discussed the American ship turned around before

the wind and stood away from the *Macedonian,* steering so as to cross her course at a great distance.

Capt. Carden fell into the second trap. If he had any chance at all it was by rushing into close-range combat at once, where at least all his guns could be used. But seeing the *United States* apparently unwilling to fight unless she could weather out on him, he suddenly hauled his ship up on the wind, cutting adrift his studdingsails in his haste. This preserved his coveted weather-gauge—but it also prolonged the time and the distance in which his ship would have to suffer before she could get in a blow.

The *United States* was at this time captained by Stephen Decatur, an American sailor with a greater reputation for head-long dash and daring than for cautious and deliberate strategy. But in this action he played the waiting game of the spider with the fly. With a much stronger and somewhat slower ship his chief concern was not how to overwhelm his enemy, but how to prevent his enemy's escape. Nor did the fact that he and Carden were acquaintances, if not personal friends, prevent either doing the utmost for the honor of his flag.

Fifteen minutes after the first wearing, or turning away, Decatur wore the *United States* round again, bringing her back into a course opposite to that of the *Macedonian,* crossing tacks with her at a mile's distance. As the ships passed one another the *United States* long distance battery blazed, hulling the *Macedonian;* and the latter, having shortened sail for action and being too far away to hit with 18-pounders, silently altered her course so as to close up, steering for the American's port quarter. One shot in this first broad-



FADED CRIMSON RELIC OF RASH, BUT GALLANT ACTION.—Remains of the *Macedonian's* Red ensign in Annapolis Naval Academy. The tattered flag, much decayed in its upper portion, is a quadrilateral of bunting 16 feet 4 inches long by 9 feet 6 inches wide. It is sewn together from thirteen unlucky strips.

side from the *United States* knocked the ball from under the wooden lion's paw. It was taken as an ill-omen, and proved such; but let this be remembered: the last shot from the last broadside from the United States, or any other nation, will never knock the world from under Britain's feet. Britain can only be beaten from within; and, please God, Britain never shall be beaten.



THE *MACEDONIAN'S* LION?

This wooden figure of a lion is in Bancroft Hall, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., and by tradition came from the captured *Macedonian;* but unless there were two lions on the *Macedonian's* quarter-deck this relic upsets the story of the first broadside knocking the ball from under the lion's foot. It is more probable that the wooden lion is the one carried away by the American invaders when the Parliament House at York (Toronto) was burned, April 27, 1813.

When the British ship was within half a mile her bowchasers and forward guns began to play. The American turned off before the wind again so that the *Macedonian's* guns could not bear on her; then, as the British ship came on, she hauled up and belched broadsides at her from her short heavy forty-two pounders on the spar deck, as well as from the long twenty-fours of the main battery. So rapidly were the guns of the *United States* worked that their continuous flashes made her maindeck seem to be on fire.

Realizing all too late the mistake of engaging at long distance, Capt. Carden now set more sail to get

through the deadly barrage. The American, "flowing her jibsheet, hauling out her spanker, and backing her mizzen topsail," stood still, but under control, in the advantageous position she now held, and plied the *Macedonian* with might and main. The British ship lost her mizzen topmast, then her main yard, and the maintopsail, and her decks were running with blood, and her quarterdeck and forecastle batteries were dismantled.

The less sail she had left the longer the passage through the hailstorm of cannon-balls. She was a beaten ship by the time she got close enough to fight. And all the preliminary damage she had been able to inflict was to shoot away the mizzen topgallantmast on which the *United States* was not carrying any sail.

But when she got alongside the death waggon she pounded her for half an hour, her small-calibre guns making little impression on the twenty inches of solid wood with which the *United States* was cased. The *Macedonian's* 32-pounder carronades, meant for such smashing close-range work, had been dismantled before she could bring them into play.

Down came the *Macedonian's* foretopmast, and down came the main, leaving her a mere tow-barge rig. There still remained the chance of winning out by boarding, though the odds were now worse than two to one; and through the thunder of the great guns rang the captain's trumpet: "Boarders, stand by! Quartermaster, lay the enemy aboard!"

"Every man," wrote Lieut. David Hope, himself wounded in the head and the leg, and refusing to go below, "was on deck, several who had lost an arm, and the universal cheer was 'Let us conquer or die!'

as the *Macedonian* put her helm a-weather to board the *United States.*"

One sail alone now controlled the *Macedonian's* course—the foresail, although even part of it had been stripped from its yard. As she swung the forebrace was shot away. The unmanageable after canvas pushed her stern from the wind and she turned in a circle against her helm, helpless and "in irons," rolling her maindeck gun-mouths into the water.

The *United States,* in perfect condition save for the loss of one unneeded spar, hereupon filled her mizzen topsail, and, gathering way, steered across the shattered *Macedonian's* bows and on out of gunshot. As she went by the remnants of the British crew—more than a hundred of the 262 men and 35 boys had been mowed down—cheered again and again. Were they downhearted? No!!!

It may have been humanity which caused Stephen Decatur to forebear pouring a raking torrent of death into that gallant band of unbeaten Britons; or it may have been lack of cartridges.

The British used paper or flannel cartridges, which were prepared in great quantities and fouled the gun-barrels; the Americans used more costly cartridges of sheet-lead, which could be filled as needed. Certain it is, while the *Macedonian* lay wallowing in the trough, the *United States* employed her leisure re-filling cartridges; but it is scarcely to be believed that she was down to the last one when she ceased fire.

They kept the torn red ensign flying for an hour longer on the *Macedonian,* while the survivors toiled mightily to get her under control; but as they worked the wounded mizzen mast rolled overboard, leaving

only the foreyard to spread any sail. The *United States,* fit as a fiddle, sailed back to her old deadly position, and Capt. Carden, realizing now that he was exposing brave men to useless carnage, hauled down his flag.

The *Macedonian* had had thirty-six killed and sixty-eight wounded out of a total crew of two hundred and ninety-seven.

The *United States,* choosing her own time and distance for fighting, had only seven killed and five wounded.

Stephen Decatur, half French, half Irish, played the magnanimous victor to perfection. When Capt. Carden presented his sword he started back, with speech, according to Marshall, somewhat like this:

"Never, sir, could I take the sword of a man who has so nobly defended its honor. Let me rather have the hand of the gallant officer whom it has been my fortune in war to subdue. Though I cannot claim any merit for capturing a ship of so much inferior force, I feel assured you shall gain much credit from your persevering and truly gallant defense."

Nevertheless Capt. Decatur's voice was not heard later in protest when a special committee of Congress voted him and his crew $200,000, the full appraised value of his prize of "inferior force," although such prize money was only awarded when contestants were "equal." It would, perhaps, have been more than human to do so. Decatur was of an attractive character in many ways, but, like Perry, a trifle theatrical.

The prisoners from the *Macedonian* were amazed at the thickness of the wooden walls of their captor, and the size of her spars; and as though these were

not huge enough her lower masts had "four large quarter-fishes girthed upon them," that is, immense slabs of timber bound on with hoops, so as to reinforce them should they be shot through and through. Two five inch cannon-balls had gone through the mainmast without materially weakening it. But what surprised the *Macedonians* still more was the number of former shipmates they found on board.

Over one of the *United States* ports "V-I-C-T-O-R-Y" had been chalked by the gun crew, and over another the word "N-E-L-S-O-N" showed the American gunner's claim to have been rowers in Nelson's barge.

"I have not a seaman on board," boasted Decatur, "but has served five to twelve years in the British Navy."

This, in addition to the faster sheet-lead cartridges, might account for the fact that the *United States* fired seventy broadsides while the *Macedonian* was firing thirty-six, and for general efficiency of the American frigate's crew. But it does not imply that the *United States* was manned with renegade Britons. The British Navy of one thousand sail gathered in seamen of all nations; sometimes wrongfully, by impressment, and often voluntarily, by enlistment. Eight "foreigners," employed as fiddlers and trumpeters aboard the *Macedonian* herself, were allowed to go below out of harm's way in the battle. The muster-roll of Trafalgar quite bears out the claim of the Nelson bargemen. There were some native-born Americans in that great conflict which was fought when Britain and the *United States* were at peace.

William Hearne, of London, an officer's servant aboard the *Macedonian,* discovered his own brother in the *United States* crew.

"Join up, Bill, and get your freedom," urged brother, when the greetings were over.

"If you are a damned rascal it's no reason I should be one" was William's fraternal reply.

CAPTOR and prize, the latter jury-rigged as a barque, after the battle, steered for the coast of America and reached there in December, the *United States* going into Newport, the *Macedonian* into New London.

The British officers were well treated. The American commander saw to it that their personal property was respected, even to the extent of preserving for them a private stock of wine they had purchased for friends in England. But the seamen were first cajoled to desert their flag and join the American navy, and next, on sticking to their colors, treated with all the rigors of prisoners of war. Learning this the British officers, who had been landed when the *Macedonian* arrived at New London, returned on board and insisted on sharing the fortunes of their men.

It was a hard life in the British Navy in those days, but not a man of the tempted *Macedonian's* fell.

The Americans made much of the *Macedonian.* She was the finest prize they had yet captured in the war, the finest prize they ever captured and got into port. British vessels usually fought until there was not enough left of them to stay afloat; the *Guerriere* did that, and the *Java* and the *Reindeer* and the *Penguin,* and the *Avon* and the *Peacock.*

The Americans refitted the *Macedonian* as a frigate, and put her on their navy list; but she never got to sea. The iron grip of her former comrades kept her blockaded in New London while the war lasted.

Washington went wild over the victory. A splendid ball was given for the naval officers who were in the city, including Captain Hull, Morris and Stewart. Pennsylvania Avenue to Capitol Hill was ablaze with lights and the Capitol was crammed with rejoicing Americans. At ten o'clock young Archibald Hamilton, son of the Secretary of the Navy, with the *Macedonian's* ensign over his arm, entered the crowded ballroom, carried by many officers. He sprang from their shoulders and clasped his mother in his arms and embraced his sisters. The captured flag was seized and held above the heads of Capt. Hull, Lieutenant Morris and Capt. Stewart, amid tremendous cheers, and the band played "Hail Columbia!" The ensign was then spread at the feet of Mrs. Madison, wife of the President.

"Good heavens, I wouldn't touch that color for a thousand dollars!" exclaimed one American lady, Mrs. B. H. Latrobe, "I could not look at those colors with pleasure, the taking of which has made so many widows and orphans!"

Mrs. Latrobe may have been alone in such an attitude, but events justified her when she wrote, describing the incident:

"Between ourselves, I think it wrong to exult so outrageously over our enemies. We may have reason to laugh on the other side of our mouths some of these days; and as the English are so much stronger than we are with their navy, there are ten chances to one that we are beaten."

Twenty months later the Capitol where this rejoicing was held was in ashes, sailors of the British navy were policing the streets of Washington, Mrs.

Madison's valiant husband was in hiding and his cabinet was in flight. The gay young lieutenant who, after kissing his mother and sisters, had flung the *Macedonian's* colors at the feet of Mrs. Madison, met his death in the running-fight in which Commodore Decatur and the frigate *President* were captured.

XIV

A Midshipman's Coverlet

WHEN Capt. Henry Lambert, of H.M.S. *Java,* sighted the U.S.S. *Constitution* off the coast of Brazil, on the morning of December 29, 1812, he would have been no coward if he had run and kept on running till he reached Bombay. That was his destination, and conveying a newly appointed governor thither was his mission.

The *Java* was cluttered with cargo and supernumeraries like a Channel packet. Her company of 377 included the new governor, Lt.-Gen. Hislop, and his suite; 23 little boys; sixty Irishmen who had never been afloat before they crossed St. George's Channel; fifty malcontents from the irons of the sloop-of-war *Coquette;* fifty marines, eighteen of them raw recruits; a group of Marine Society lads, being sent out to India, and a hundred wretches gathered by the pressgang or combed from prison-hulks. The crew had never smelt powder—with the exception of six rounds of blank fired the night before the *Constitution* was sighted, the first gunnery practice in their lives, and the first since the ship had left Spithead.

Fifty-three guns to forty-six, 722 pound broadsides to 427, 1,576 tons burden to 1,073 tons, 480 seasoned fighters to 377 nondescripts—these were the odds against the *Java.* Her crew, poor as it was, had been weakened by using 20 men to man the American ship *William,* a prize which the *Java* was towing when the

Constitution was sighted. Casting off the *William* Capt. Lambert drove the *Java* for the enemy under all the sail she could bear, going ten knots through the water. The *Java* was a "little, screwed-up ship—her sides so tumbled in that she appeared, at the gangways, scarcely wider than the American sloop *Hornet.*" She could not stand the pressure of her royals in the strong breeze and lay over so far that they had to be taken in to keep her guns out of the water. But the great *Constitution,* five hundred tons larger and sixty per cent. stronger in guns and fighting men, bowled along under full sail.

Commodore William Bainbridge, who had succeeded Capt. Hull in command of the *Constitution,* suspected that the distant *William,* standing inshore for the shelter of the Portuguese port of San Salvador or Bahia, was another British man-of-war. Bainbridge ran offshore, both to lure the *Java* out of neutral waters and to separate her from her supposed support.

It was eight o'clock in the morning when the *Java* sighted the *Constitution.* It was two o'clock in the afternoon before she got within striking distance.

The *Constitution* fired first, while they were half a mile apart. The shot from her larboard guns splashed the water into the *Java's* starboard ports. Capt. Lambert stood on until almost past the *Constitution;* then, receiving another broadside, which sailed overhead, he let drive with his starboard guns.

There were eight men aboard the *Java* who had volunteered from H.M.S. *Rodney.* They alone practically fought the whole main deck batteries. Their blast of balls crashed through the twenty-inch wooden walls of "Old Ironsides," killing four men, wounding many more and smashing the steering wheel. The

Constitution's guns roared again, and again missed. Steered by tiller-ropes from below, the American swung off and turned around in the smoke. When she again became visible she was on the opposite or starboard tack. The *Java,* encouraged rather than appalled by these first three broadsides, came around on the same tack and went after her hammer and tongs.

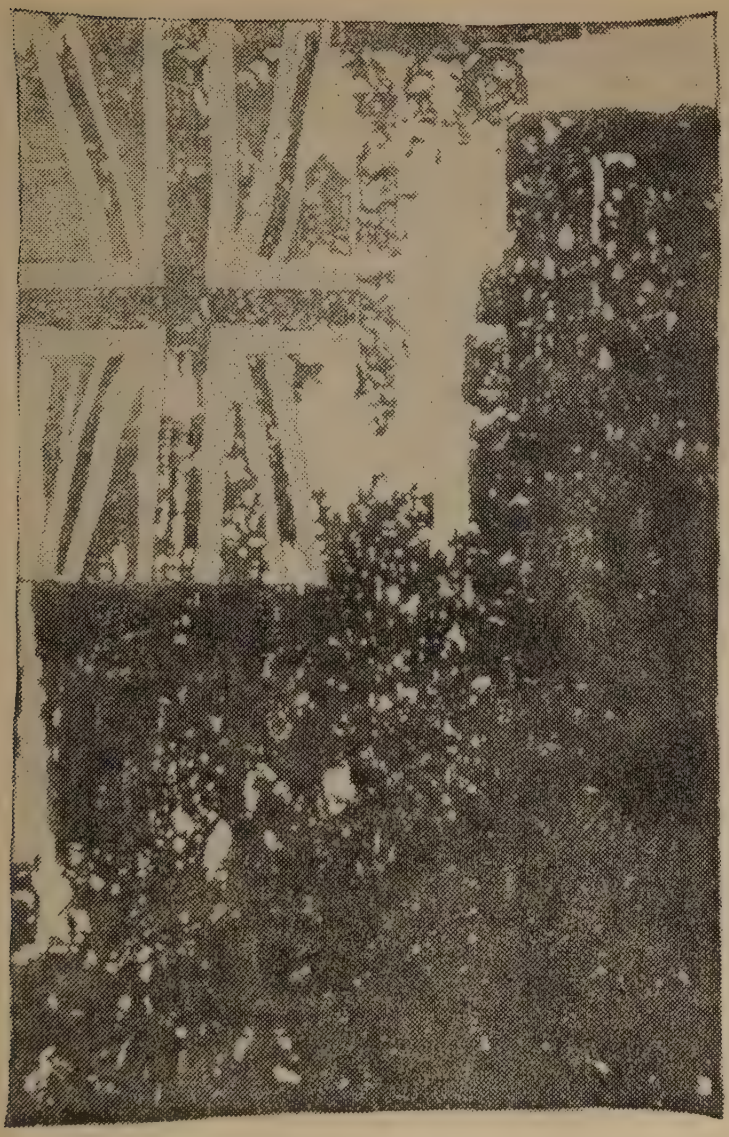
It was madness, sheer madness, for the *Java* to fight the *Constitution* at all;—but whatever the *Java* lacked in head was almost made up in heels. The galled American turned around again before the wind to keep her killing distance; the *Java* nimbly turned with her and sailed across her stern.

So little was the British frigate that her main yardarm was hardly high enough to pass over the *Constitution's* taffrail.

From the *Java's* forecastle they could look up, through the *Constitution's* stern-windows, into her cabin. One by one each eighteen-pounder long gun and 32-pounder carronade on the nearest side of the *Java* should have roared a message of death through the length of the *Constitution's* hull.

But the luckless Lambert's tyro crew simply gasped, from sheer ignorance, at this close view of such a large ship. No one knew what to do. The *Rodney* men were down in the dark of the main deck, working the eighteen-pounders. The rolling smoke so filled the squares of the open gunports that they did not realize that it was the *Constitution* that was blotting out the daylight.

Lieutenant James Saunders, one of the officer-passengers, ran to the forecastle and fired the nine-pounder plump into the passing ship. His example should have



Remnants of the *Java's* Ensign, preserved in the collection of Naval trophies in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. It is a red flag, 19 feet long and 17 feet wide, in a very decrepit condition.

told the others what to do; but they did not realize their opportunity until it was gone.

The *Constitution* again stood off, with the wind on the port side, and the British frigate following her. Fifteen minutes after this first close-up the *Java's* nimble heels enabled her to again cross the *Constitution's* stern, this time obliquely and at some little distance.

The opposite sides would now be engaged, and the gun crews would have to cross the smoking decks from the port to the starboard batteries. Again the untrained men failed to understand the battery orders bellowed at them.

"Starboard forward division, fire point-blank as she bears! Number one! Number two! Number—"

It was all Greek to the greenies, and the words were lost in the roar of the first gun. Three forward guns at most responded. The *Java,* headreaching fast, was past her target and out of range ere the dazed gun crews understood what an opportunity had been lost for the second and last time.

The *Java* shot ahead of the *Constitution.* She was again to windward, and could have yet made sail and got safely away with all the honors of an action against vastly superior force. But she waited, while the *Constitution,* setting foresail and mainsail, came up on her.

In this exchange of broadsides the American shot away the head of the *Java's* bowsprit, and with it went her jib and foretopmast staysail. The *Constitution* again turned off before the wind, so as to steer across the *Java's* stern and rake, as the *Java* had twice failed to do to her.

To avoid this, Capt. Lambert tried to tack. His

crippled vessel swung into the wind quickly enough, but paid off slowly, from lack of head-sail; and the *Constitution* raked her, from forward aft, at 400 yards distance.

Still the British bulldog was unbeaten. Firing her port battery as she paid off, the *Java* drew up to within pistol-shot of the *Constitution* and fought broadside to broadside.

Of course there could only be one outcome, and that was as certain as that a 24-pound shot outweighs an 18. The *Java's* masts were so splintered they would not carry sail, her crew was mowed down, and the sailing-master and other officers who were able to direct manoeuvres were killed.

"Hard up the helm and lay her aboard at the larboard main-chains! Call the boarders!" cried Capt. Lambert.

It was the last resort, and the mates' shrill whistles resounded through the smoke-filled decks.

"I had my orders from Lieutenant Chads before the action began to cheer up the boarders with my pipe so that they make a clean spring of it," shouted Boatswain James Humble into the surgeon's ear as that man of blood bound his mangled arm with a tourniquet. "So up I am going!"

And back he staggered to the upper deck with the remains of his arm in the bosom of his shirt. His right hand was gone, but his left held his whistle to his brave lips.

The *Constitution's* port batteries raked the *Java* as she came head on, shearing off the maintopmost at the cap and the wounded foremast half way up. The falling spars crushed in the forecastle and fell on the main

deck guns, killing the men crowded in the gangways and on the forecastle head for boarding. The unmanageable ship just missed her mark; the stump of the bowsprit touched the *Constitution's* mizzen rigging, twisted the *Java* into the same line as the *Constitution* so that not a gun would bear, then scraped clear, passing over the American ship's taffrail.

Now the *Constitution,* lying ahead of her helpless foe, turned until her starboard batteries bore, and poured a raking broadside through her bows. Passing to the stern, she gave her another broadside with the starboard guns, then wore and recommenced with the port batteries.

A musket-ball from the *Constitution's* maintop struck Capt. Lambert in the left breast. He was carried below, and Lieut. Henry Ducie Chads, himself painfully wounded, had to take charge.

The wreck of the foremast and maintopmast and all the upper yards lay on the *Java's* starboard side. Under and among it the eight heroes of the *Rodney* and their willing but unskilful pupils worked the red-hot guns. With every discharge they set the wreck on fire. Those who could not shoot manned buckets to quench the blaze; the American musketmen mowed down gunners and bucket brigade alike, while salvo after salvo of roundshot, cannister and grape burst through the blazing splinters.

The *Constitution* slowly passed along the starboard side and crossed the *Java's* bows, firing broadside after broadside. A bar-shot took away another section of the stump of the foremast. The spanker gaff was shot away, and then the spanker boom. Then the mizzenmast went. The lower part of the mainmast was the

only spar left of what had been, two hours before, a full-rigged three-masted ship.

Then the *Constitution,* under two topsails, jib and spanker, passed to windward, out of gunshot, for repairs; and as she went the eight *Rodney* men and such of the Irish peasants and Marine Society boys and jailbirds and mutineers and pressed men as were still alive cheered and cheered and cheered and dared her to come back!

One Union Jack which had been lashed in the mainrigging of the *Java* at the beginning of the battle was still flying, although all the sails above it had been shot away. When the mizzenmast fell the undaunted Britons rescued the Union Jack which had floated at the head of that mast and nailed it to the stump. Under these brave flags they nobly strove to refit their shattered hulk for the last round of the contest; for it was evident that the U.S.S. *Constitution* had only passed ahead out of gunshot to make repairs and refill cartridges. Her only damage was the loss of her maintopsail yard.

Ten of the *Java's* sixteen carronades, on forecastle and quarter-deck, had been disabled. Of the twenty-eight maindeck guns several were also out of commission. The ship, with no sail left to steady her, rolled in the trough till the waves burst in through the maindeck ports.

One hundred and two men had been wounded and twenty-two were dead. But in the hour's respite the survivors toiled like Trojans. They loaded the remaining guns with grape and round, and attempted to get the hulk to answer her helm. They spread a sail between the stumps of the foremast and bowsprit. The

mainyard had been shot in two, but one half hung aloft on the shattered mast. From this they set the goosewing of the mainsail. They even got a topgallant-mast clear from the wreck of spars and rigged it up as a jury foremast, and set a lower studdingsail on it.

Under this rig the poor cripple could be made to steer so long as she kept the wind behind her. She lurched through the water about as fast as a lame man could stumble. But the tottering mainmast swayed and threatened to add to the mass of wreckage which had crushed so many men and encumbered the guns.

To save themselves the *Javas* had to cut the mast through and let it fall over the side. With it went the last vestige of control of the ship by her sails; and when the refitted *Constitution* swooped down on her again in the tropic dusk, three hours and a half after the firing of the first broadside, the last Union Jack came down from the stump of the splintered mizzen.

ALL next day the *Java* rocked and rolled in the tumble of the trade-winds, while the two boats left of the *Constitution's* original set of eight transferred the prisoners and their belongings.

Among the hundred and two wounded down in the dark of the *Java's* sick-bay was Midshipman Edward Keele, thirteen years old, a child who had come to sea on his first voyage. He had been mortally mangled. One leg had to be amputated.

"Doctor, has the ship struck?" he asked each time the surgeon made his rounds.

Everyone kept the bad news from him. But there was something in the forced heartiness of their replies which failed to convince him. One of the sailors spread

the ship's colors over him with a "There, young master, the ship's right as rain as long as that covers the both of you."

After that, when the surgeon came, the little boy did not bother him with questions. He plucked at the bunting contentedly. He sank into a stupor. He roused as strange men began to carry the wounded up for the ferrying across to the *Constitution*. He drew a fold of his covering close to his face, so that his blurring eyes could see its red color in the flickering candlelight.

"It's all right," he sighed.

"It's....the....British flag!" And he went to sleep.

It is never gratifying to read of a British defeat; but if there is no profit for us in hearing of how the men of the *Java* bore themselves in the time of trial, then every British victory has been won in vain.

The *Java's* ensign hangs among other trophies in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.; a very much tattered piece of faded red bunting, nineteen feet long by twelve feet wide, with large areas entirely missing where the Union Jack part joins the body of the flag.

It may be the very flag which covered Eddie Keele. Particulars of its history are unknown. To its captors unto the third and fourth generation it is merely an honorable emblem of a victory fairly won. To British hearts who know its story it is the great red seal of courage; courage of a captain splendid in spite of rashness; courage of a crew which transformed jailbirds and landlubbers into heroes and martyrs.

There must ever be a seed for all good fruit; and

the good seed whence sprung, the *Java's* brave defence was the handful of eight *Rodney* men who volunteered for a voyage for which all the pressgangs of Portsmouth and Spithead could not find sufficient sailors.

The *Java* never wore any other colors than Eddie Keele's "British flag." She had fought till she could not be carried off as a prize, and she had broken up the *Constitution's* cruise. "Old Ironsides" had been mauled until all she could do was limp into the first port for temporary repairs and then go home for a complete overhauling.

The water was deepening in the *Java's* hold when she surrendered. She had shot all the *Constitution's* boats to pieces but two, and had lost all her own. Those two boats crawled back and forth for forty-eight hours between the two ships, rising and falling on the South Atlantic billows.

One brought the dying Capt. Lambert to the victor's cabin. Another added, by tortured instalments, one hundred British wounded to the forty-two American sufferers who already lay in the *Constitution's* 'tween-decks. It brought Lieut.-Gen. Hislop and his suite and his silver plate. The boats brought the remaining unhurt men in batches to the bilboes and handcuffs of the *Constitution's* hold; and finally crept away from the shattered *Java,* leaving smoke-wreaths swirling above her open hatches. She was ending in flames, on the last day of 1812. The number of men who had been killed in her may never be known. Twenty-two was the British official figure. Americans questioned that. Commodore Bainbridge said sixty. Theodore Roosevelt places the number at forty-eight.

It was not the first time the frigate had been taken.

She was originally the French ship *Renomée,* and was captured by the British in a squadron battle off Madagasgar in 1811. She was renamed when refitted for the British service.

THE *Constitution* filled her topsails and stood off to a safe distance to watch the explosion. Commodore Bainbridge, smarting with the pain of a battle wound, angrily cried to his first lieutenant:

"Why, Mr. Parker, have you left that ship burning without the Stars and Stripes flying?"

"Sir," answered Lieutenant Parker, "there are no Stars and Stripes in that ship's flag-locker."

Parker had been born in England.

It was too far to make another trip in the overworked boat, and the *Java* burned undisturbed, bursting with a tremendous crash as the flames reached her powder.

"Oh, to think of all them shining ingots gone to Davy Jones!" exclaimed one of the British prisoners in the commodore's hearing.

"Ay, case after case of them, the color of the sun of a summer's morning," added another, with a wink.

"Sorrow on them, though they shone like Malachy's collar of gold itself," quickly contributed one of the Irish lads. "Didn't we break the backs and the hearts of us stowin' them safe like a king's ransom? If we had the price of them now, sure, it's gold bangles we'd wear in place of these iron bracelets."

The commodore flew into a rage. Ingots? Gold? Had Mr. Parker been idiot enough to leave specie and bullion in the prize while rescuing an Indian nabob's service of plate?

He questioned the prisoners further. All they

could tell his honor—or all they would tell—was that package after package of metal, heavy and shining, had been stowed with great care in the hold. Its value they did not know. It might be millions. It might—

For days the victor fretted and fumed with disappointment, as he slowly steered for St. Salvador; until the British officers, pitying him, explained that the cases in the hold of the blown-up ship contained not gold or silver, but copper for the sheathing and fastenings of three ships being built in Bombay.

That put him in a better humor; and, although he left his humbler prisoners in handcuffs and allowed them to be pillaged, he restored to Gen. Hislop his precious service of plate, treated the officers well, and paroled all his captives when he got them into port.

The Governor, in turn, presented his captor-host with a ceremonial sword. He might have been better employed presenting him with the service article, point first; for Bainbridge allowed his valiant victim, Capt. Lambert, to be buried in a foreign land without more attention than if he had been a stowaway.

Capt. Lambert died on Jan. 4, the day after the *Constitution* got into St. Salvador, in Brazil. Three American ships were in the harbor—U.S.S. *Constitution,* U.S.S. *Hornet* and the recaptured *William;* but not an officer from one of them went to the funeral.

Bainbridge is said to have placed his captive's sword on his cot as he was being carried from the ship to the shore, when she made port. Lambert was then suffering intense pain and could not speak. He will rest no less easily that those who did him to death failed to join the group of stranger Portuguese who paid the last rites over his obscure grave. As Brit-

ishers we may be glad that our forefathers showed kindlier treatment to Southcomb of the *Lottery,* Lawrence of the *Chesapeake* and other Americans who died warring against them.

Lawrence, by the way, was the commander of the *Hornet* at the time of Lambert's death; and it is a regrettable fact that Lawrence's last letter written just before his fatal encounter with the *Shannon,* contains a somewhat querulous claim for prize-money for the capture of the *Java*—at which he was not present. The appearance of Lawrence's ship on the scene a day or two after the battle with the *Java* was responsible for the death of one of Lawrence's own countrymen.

The *Constitution,* not at first identifying the *Hornet,* beat to quarters when she was sighted. Lieut. John C. Aylwin of the *Constitution* had been sailing master of that vessel when she fought the *Guerriere,* and was then wounded. Although only recently recovered, he fought gallantly in the action with the *Java,* and when the two ships came together Mr. Aylwin leaped into the *Constitution's* quarterdeck hammock-cloths to repel boarders. While firing his pistol at the enemy he was wounded in the shoulder, but fought on throughout the engagement. When the *Hornet* was sighted he left his cot, although suffering great pain, and repaired to quarters. This so aggravated his fresh wound, that he died and was buried at sea.

XV

Two Peacocks and a Sparrowhawk

OF the thirty-seven captured British Union Jacks, ensigns and pennants at Annapolis, Md., not one need cause a British head to hang in shame. In the case of the flags lost on Lake Champlain indignation is the sentiment. Not one flag is the emblem of disgrace. All reflect honor on their captors. With very few exceptions they reflect still greater honor on the men who lost them, through the gallant efforts these made against overwhelming odds.

One vessel whose defence did not measure up to the high standards of conduct of the British navy at its best was the brig *Epervier* captured on the coast of Florida, April 29th, 1814.

How bad our "worst" was in the war of 1812 may be fairly judged from the stories which cling to two flags at Annapolis—one so very faded and frail that the linen backing is more prominent than the original material; the other dingy, but apparently well preserved in the case in which it is folded.

War vessels a hundred years ago flew their ensigns at the stern, or at the peak of the gaff, and their jacks forward, often at the foremast head. The well preserved flag is the *Epervier's* Union Jack; the frayed and frail one the ensign of the British *Peacock*. The two are associated to this extent: the *Epervier* lost her flag to an American vessel named in celebration of the destruction of an earlier British ship.

The *Epervier* was a short, slapped-together, contract-built brig-sloop named after a captured French vessel—the name means "sparrowhawk"—built of fir, rushed into service like the vessels of the United States Shipping Board a century later, and not more efficient than they.

When the *Epervier* went to sea the best British sailors slept by thousands in watery graves. The *Epervier's* crew of 118 were the "leavings" after twenty years of having to man ships to fight on every sea of the world against every nation of the world.

Sixteen of the crew were boys; two of them were old fellows of seventy; many were runaway slaves or foreigners, and of the whole lot only six were competent to take the helm or heave the lead!

Nor was her captain, Richard Walter Wales, of that stern stuff which puts the polish on the roughest diamond. Halifax knew the *Epervier* well. She came beating up past Thrum Cap and George's Island in a snowstorm on the 25th of February, 1813, with a Yankee prize under her lee—the privateer-brig *Alfred,* of Salem, with sixteen long 9-pounders and 108 men, captured off Cape Sable without firing a shot, two days before. The reason for Capt. Wales choosing the chance of being wrecked entering port in a gale, instead of riding it out where he had plenty of sea room, was that he had discovered part of his nondescript crew in conspiracy with their privateer prisoners to rise against him and his officers, seize both ships and carry them into an American port!

Wales was not listened to by the naval heads at Halifax. Within a week, without a man of his crew being changed—although he got a couple of 18-pound



THE PRIVATEER *ALFRED.*

Captured by the British brig *Epervier* in 1813; from a copy of a painting by Nicolai Carmellieri, in the Old State House, Boston. Note the varying number of stripes in the two American flags, as painted by the foreign artist. The *Alfred* was built at Salem, Mass., in 1805, and was of 260 tons. She surrendered without firing a shot.

carronades in place of three smaller guns—he was packed off for West Indian convoy duty. It was in performance of this, a month or so later, that the *Epervier* was lost.

She was bringing a Russian ship and a brigantine northwards. Off the Florida coast a large ship under British colors bore down on them. This was the American sloop-of-war *Peacock*—not the British *Peacock,* but an American vessel built and named in honor of the British brig which fell a prey to Capt. James Lawrence, in the U.S.S. *Hornet,* on February 24, 1813; the owner of the tattered red *Peacock's* ensign still to be seen at Annapolis.

OF this fight between the British *Peacock* and the *Hornet* it may be said in passing that it was a battle between a heavyweight and a lightweight, the heavyweight in training and the lightweight out of it.

The *Hornet* had 32-pounders against the *Peacock's* 24-pounders—and more of them. She was the bigger ship and she had more men.

The *Peacock* had lived up to her name, and was known as the "yacht of the navy." She sparkled with brass swivels on capstan and quarterdeck, the elevating screws and traversing bars of her black iron carronades were polished till they matched the other brasswork in brilliancy, and the breechings of her guns were lined with pipe-clayed white canvas. But—the guns were not fired off because the Admiralty hated to "waste" powder in target practice and Capt. Peake hated the mess it made of his snow-white decks.

So the *Peacock* went down under the *Hornet's* broadsides like a cutglass loving cup hit by a stone; and all that can be said in favor of Capt. Peake is that

he did not try to dodge his fate, and faced bravely the death in action which overtook him and seven of his crew. Nine more of them drowned when the *Peacock* sank—with her ensign flying, union down, in the fore-rigging. Four of the British crew escaped in a stern boat and reached the coast of British Guiana in safety.

Americans have made the statement that the *Peacock* was put down in full view of another British brig, the *Espiègle,* which lay at anchor throughout the action, afraid to leave her moorings. That is not so. The *Espiègle* lay repairing her rigging, 24 miles away, and



THE *EPERVIER'S* JACK, in its case in Annapolis Naval Academy.

knew nothing of the battle until next day, when pieces of the *Peacock's* wreck washed past her.

THUS it was that the ship that bore down on the *Epervier's* convoy wore a British name. That she flew British bunting was a ruse de guerre, quite proper under the rules of the game. The *Epervier* sent her convoy on their way and hauled up to investigate. She soon discovered that the British ensign and pennant were shams. No answer was made to her signals, and she cleared for action.

The action lasted forty-five minutes. It is surprising that it took that long.

The American *Peacock,* with four more guns than the short British brig—and all of those working—simply shot her to pieces. At the first broadside the fighting-bolts of the *Epervier's* carronades drew. Later the breeching-bolts went. The guns slewed around or rolled over on their carriages.

Two chance shots had splintered the *Peacock's* foreyard, so that she could only continue sailing before the wind. A resourceful commander, in Capt. Wales' position, might have snatched victory by so manoeuvring his own ship as to force the *Peacock* to attempt to sail to windward or else be raked by a deadly fire.

Frequent gun-practice would have exposed the weakness of the contractor's ironwork in the *Epervier* during the sixteen months she had been in commission, but the Admiralty was so stingy of powder and shot, and Wales was so worried over his makeshift crew, that he had had no opportunity of discovering or remedying the defects. While he was getting his dismounted guns back into position the opportunity of forcing the *Peacock* into a fight for the weather-gauge passed.

Before Capt. Wales could place the *Epervier* where she ought to have been he was unable to place her anywhere. Star shot from the *Peacock* guns played havoc with his spars and rigging. The mainboom, cut away, fell on the steering wheel, the maintopmast went over the side and the foremast was almost cut in two.

With his ship unmanageable, Capt. Wales tried the last resort—boarding.

His mutineers and septuagenarians and boys and

blacks were told to drop their rammers and sponges for pikes and cutlasses, and mustered aft when only one gun was left to answer the eleven in the *Peacock's* broadside, and the water was four and a half feet deep in the hold.

As the *Epervier* backed into the smoke-bank from which flamed the American guns in thunderous flashes her crew flinched.

"She's too heavy for us, sir!" they cried, and, flinging down their arms, rushed to the waterlogged hold.

So, to save the lives of the brave few who were left, the flag was lowered.

The odds against the *Epervier* were, nominally, 11 to 9 in guns and 166 to 102 in men; but such men! and such guns!

The guns couldn't fight and the men wouldn't. At this distance we look on them more in pity than in anger. The indignant historian James, who gives the above figures, declares bitterly:

> "As well might we judge of the moral character of a nation by the inmates of her jails. . . We doubt if any teaching at the guns could have amended the *Epervier's* crew. The men wanted what nature alone could give them, the hearts of Britons."

Still, gun-practice would have revealed the defects of the fittings and might have cured some of the defects of the crew. See what Broke made of the far from ideal crew of the *Shannon*!

The *Epervier* was kept afloat by shot-plugs and brought into Savannah and added to the American navy. She went with Commodore Decatur in the expedition against Algiers in 1815, and passed the Straits of Gibraltar, homeward bound, under the com-

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mand of Lieut. John T. Shubrick, on July 14, carrying despatches for America, including a copy of the treaty effected with the Barbary powers. Since then nothing has been heard of her.

Yet by mere accident or coincidence, there is an old silk ensign of alternate stripes of yellow and red in one of the cases at Annapolis, of which the history has been lost. All that is known of it is that it was catalogued in 1888 as "captured from the British brig



THE BRITISH *PEACOCK'S* ENSIGN AS IT IS TO-DAY—probably the one she sank under. She went down in shoal water. This flag, now to be seen at Annapolis, was probably the one hoisted in her rigging as a distress signal when she sank.

Epervier." It is not a flag of British or American manufacture, and similar flags are shown above the batteries of Tripoli in M. Corne's painting of that battle, fought in 1804.

LEWIS Warrington, captain of the American *Peacock,* displayed in his action with the *Epervier* the qualities of an energetic and skilful commander. The kicking carronades of the *Epervier* sent her shot so wild that the principal, and perhaps the only, injury

done was to the *Peacock's* foreyard. But two of the American sailors were wounded. One would not grudge Warrington his victory had his conduct more than a year later, when the war was well over AND HE KNEW IT, not soiled his name with the deed of a cold-blooded butcher. It was Warrington in the *Peacock* who attacked the tiny East India Company's brig *Nautilus* on 30th of June, 1815, six months after the war had ended; attacked her after being repeatedly informed of the termination of hostilities; attacked her after barbarously refusing to listen to one of her officers sent on board to notify him of the existence of peace; and left her, a little shattered bundle of planks and ribs, with seven of her crew mangled and dead and eight of them wounded—some of them horribly. Capt. Warrington claimed he had no "official" notification of peace. But the fact that the *Nautilus* was of one-quarter his force stamps his act as that of a bully. His ship's flag, with its fifteen stars and fifteen stripes, hangs in the State House, Boston.

"Fadeless fame" may not fairly be the portion of such flags as those of the *Epervier* or of either of the *Peacocks,* British or American, as compared with the reverence friend and foe alike must feel for many of the trophies which commemorate the War of 1812.

But let this be remembered: Of the pipe-clay and brass-polish crew of the British *Peacock* seventeen men, including her captain, gave their lives for their flag, and thirty suffered wounds; and of the mongrel hardbitten hundred and eighteen of the *Epervier* eight gave their lives, and fifteen more bled, in a hopeless action, ere their flag came down.

These, at least, whether black or white, home-born or foreign, lacked not the hearts of Britons.

XVI

Three-Flag Fights

FOLDED in a glass case with another captured flag, in the United States Naval Academy, is a strip or fragment of bunting measuring 2 feet 11 inches one way and 8 feet 11 inches the other. Its faded and moth-eaten red parts make an inverted "T" and a broken "V" in a vague setting of dingy blue and white hardly distinguishable from the brown linen background on which the whole is sewn.

"Ensign (half torn away) of the British schooner *Dominica,*" reads the inscription, but the remnant appears to be the upper half, or slightly more than the upper half, not of an ensign, but of a British Union Jack, the inverted "T" being the remains of the St. George's cross, the broken "V" the fragments of the Geraldine saltire, popularly known as the St. Patrick's cross, added to the Union flag in 1801.

Imagination plays upon the possibilities of the "half torn away." Was it a sheering cannon ball which claimed the other half, or did eager foemen rend the bunting in two as they tore it from its signal halliards? The prosaic antiquary, looking at the evenness of the lower edge, would suggest that the trophy has decayed where it has been folded, and that the lower part has been lost. No matter. The remainder covers the story of a gallant fight in which three flags are entwined.

That fight was fought on August 4, 1813, to the south and east of Bermuda.

Among the vessels fitted out in Charleston, South Carolina, in the year 1813 to prey upon British commerce was a large privateer schooner called after the darling of the American navy, Commodore Stephen Decatur. Despite her American name, American flag and American commission, she was practically a French vessel. She was commanded by a famous French privateer captain, Dominique Diron, and manned by a French crew.

Diron was a true freelance of the sea. In 1806 he was a-privateering under the French flag in the West Indies, but scrupled not to pillage English, Spanish and American vessels impartially. He was methodical and kept books. He credited himself with captures valued at $735,000 when Lieut. Michael Fitton, of his Majesty's schooner *Pitt,* pounded him out of the privateer *Superbe* after three days sweeping, sailing and fighting. Diron lost his schooner and his account books, but escaped with his life. He built the brig *Ravanche de la Superbe* or *Superb's Revenge* for the specific purpose of fighting Fitton in the *Pitt;* but the gallant lieutenant was turned adrift by the nepotism of the Admiralty before the challenge reached him, and for lack of a ship on his part the combat never took place.

Dominique Diron's new schooner *Decatur* was equipped after the wise fashion established by the Americans in their privateers. She had comparatively few guns—one long eighteen-pounder and six twelve-pound carronades. She had plenty of hull to float them, plenty of room to work them in, and plenty of

men to fight them—103 all told. The British naval practice, on the other hand, was to crowd little brigs and schooners with cannon until there was not even room to swing the tiller, and send them to sea with crews insufficient to work the batteries even when full-handed.

This was the case with the schooner-of-war *Dominica.* She was smaller than the *Decatur,* but she had two long six-pounders, one 32-pounder carronade, and twelve 12-pound carronades—fifteen pieces of cannon crammed into a length of eighty feet or so. To work these she was allotted a crew of 88 men and boys. This crew appears to have been reduced to 66 through incidents of service, leaving fewer than four men and a boy for each gun, with no crew at all to handle the sails.

So manned and so armed, the *Dominica* was convoying a King's packet from St. Thomas, in the Danish West Indies, towards England, when she sighted the *Decatur* three hundred miles north of the islands.

The *Dominica's* commander was Lieutenant George Wilmot Barreté, a young man of twenty-five, French in name and ancestry, British in nature and nurture.

True to the traditions of the navy in which he had already distinguished himself, young Barreté flung his schooner between the convoy and the foe, so manoeuvring as to fight the battle in the direction away from the King's packet; and the latter, although armed, made off under all sail and escaped.

The *Dominica* opened fire at 2 p.m., as soon as her carronades could get the range. It was blowing fresh, and by 2.30 the larger privateer had boiled up to within

half-gunshot. On she came, with sails swelling like trumpeter's cheeks.

"As who pursued by yell and blow,
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head"

the *Dominica* raced with her, away from the escaping packet.

Twice, when the privateer had gained so much as to overlap her quarry, she swung off the course, trying to run the short-handed schooner aboard. It was never a privateer's practice to waste time and money getting spars shot away and planking splintered in a game of "long bowls." Close action, hand-to-hand if the enemy were weaker, was the privateer's favorite and economical method of fighting.

Twice a ragged broadside blazed from the *Dominica's* ill-manned guns, as she sheered to avoid the contact; and twice the scanty gun crews leaped from breeching-tackle and traversing-bar to brace and sheet, to trim their sails for the changing course. They fired high, to cripple their pursuer; but while the shots perforated the swelling sails and cut away cordage, the tall masts stood and the hungry schooner again came roaring at them after each discharge.

The third swoop succeeded. The *Decatur* was abreast of the *Dominica,* and bored her way towards her at right angles, impaling her on her long jib-boom. The horn went through the British schooner's mainsail and lifts—perhaps it was this that tore the flag. The privateer's bow struck the *Dominica's* quarter, and over the rail poured the hordes of Frenchmen.

Young Barreté would not give up. When the *Decatur* got within musket range her numerous sharp-

The *Dominica* (right) boarded by the *Decatur* (left) fights till not a man can stand up, and ensures the escape of her convoy, the King's packet.

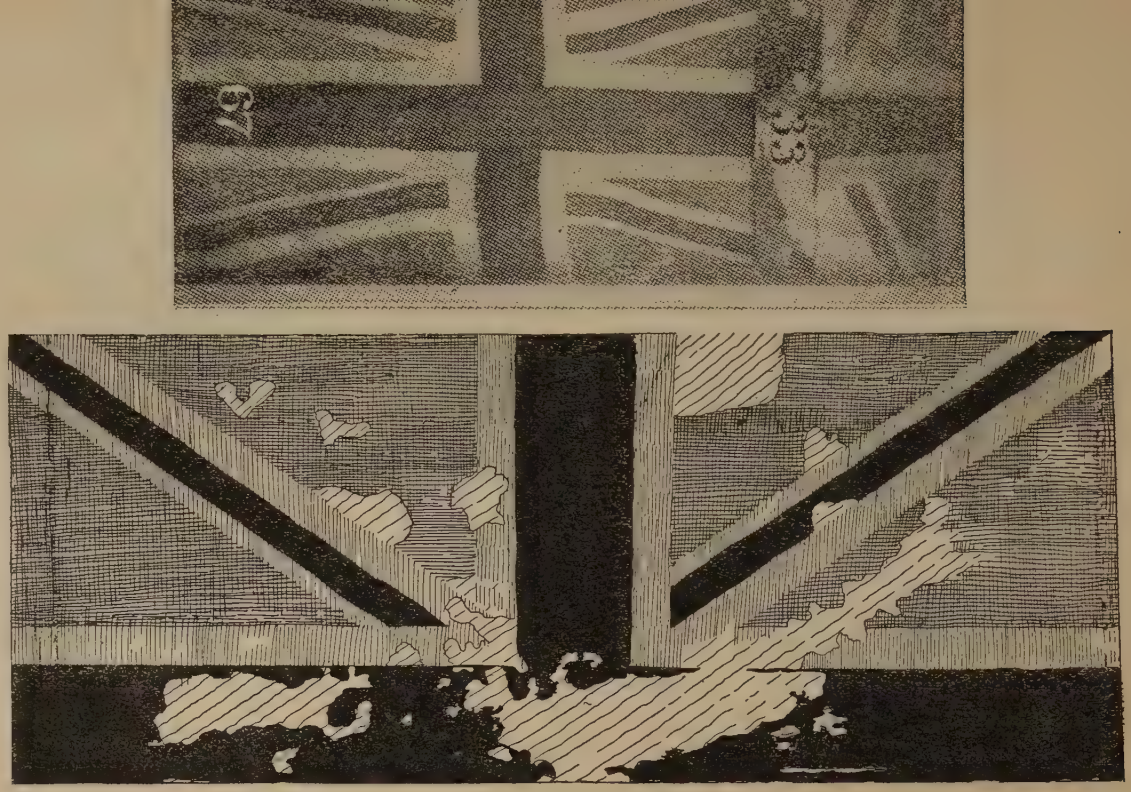
shooters had plied him hard. He had two bullets in his right arm from the beginning of the fight; but, whirling his cutlass in his left hand, he flung himself on the boarders at the head of his crew. Even the nine little boys in the *Dominica's* company fought like tiger cubs.

Nineteen of the Frenchmen were shot, hacked, or hurled overboard; but the remainder outnumbered the British two, three, four, five to one, as the moments passed. Just how terrible were the odds at the end no one knows. Brave young Barreté went down under the avalanche, dying like Manners of the *Reindeer,* sword in hand, face to the foe, and flag flying.

The colors were not torn down while there was a man left to defend them. Every officer was struck down except one midshipman and the *Dominica's* surgeon. Dominique Diron reported that 13 of the Englishmen had been killed and 47 wounded. Even out of a full ship's complement of 88 this was a tremendous casualty list. But if the schooner's crew had been reduced to 57 men and 9 boys—66 in all—before the battle, the *Dominica* comes close to establishing a record for standing punishment.

"One of her boys," says James in a quaint passage, "not eleven years old, was wounded in two places. Poor child! It would have suited thee better to have been throwing dumps (lead counters, in a game preceding marbles) than cold shot; to be gamboling in the nursery rather than contending for victory on a man-of-war's deck."

By a maddening chance, two British brigs which had been blockading Charleston for weeks went away on the morning of August 20th, 1813; and in the



ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THE *DOMINICA* TO-DAY

The torn half of a Union Jack, or possibly half-canton of an ensign, in the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. To show its condition it has been drawn with as much accuracy as possible, as well as photographed. The photograph of the two flags in the case does not illustrate it very clearly. The *Dominica's* flag is No. 33. The proportions of the members of national emblems in 1812, and the proportion of length to width, were not the fixed quantities that they are to-day. The old flag-makers in the Royal Navy were usually sailmakers or sailmakers' mates, and heraldic accuracy was not a characteristic of their handiwork.

afternoon Dominique Diron and his prize came sailing over the bar, with shot-torn ensigns streaming in the wind!

SOME of the best "American" privateers were French, like the *Decatur,* commanded by Captain Diron. Decatur himself, the hero for whom she was named, was the grandson of a Frenchman.

The privateer *Prince de Neufchatel,* of New York, was commanded by Capt. Ordroneux. She was a magnificent vessel, brigantine rigged, of 310 tons, and heavily armed, mounting seventeen guns. She made a prosperous cruise in 1814, which reduced her crew of 170 men to 40, through combats and captures necessitating the manning of prizes. On Oct. 11, when homeward bound, with $300,000 worth of prize goods on board, she was becalmed off Nantucket, within sight of safety after taking the pilot on board. The British frigate *Endymion,* Capt. Henry Hope, spied her far off. Not being able to close with her, Capt. Hope sent five of his boats, under Lieut. Abel Hawkins, with 110 men, to take her.

After a long hard pull of five miles through the Atlantic swells the boats came up with the brigantine, and found her prepared for a desperate resistance. Her boarding nettings were up, her guns run out, crammed with grape and cannister, and shot-racks filled with cannon balls for staving-in boats lined the bulwarks. Three hundred flint-lock pistols and muskets, taken from different prizes, were loaded and piled in baskets around the deck for quick use by the scanty crew. Capt. Ordroneux's predicament was, indeed, a serious one, for with his crew reduced to forty men

he was further handicapped by having thirty-seven prisoners on his hands from the merchant ships he had taken.

Weary as they were with the long row, the bulldog British pulled alongside through the hail of bullets and grape-shot that lashed the water. Crash! went the cannon balls through the bottoms of the boats, but up the brigantine's sides the gallant boarders swarmed.

Lieut. Hawkins was killed, and they were beaten back. Again they tried, and the midshipman who succeeded in command was killed, and again they were hurled into the sea or their sinking boats.

On they came again, this time attacking the bows, trying to climb by the bobstays and bowsprit rigging. Some of them gained the forecastle. Capt. Ordroneux, ever resourceful, ran in one of his great guns, loaded with langridge, and fired it along the brigantine's deck at the advancing group. They went down under the horrible hail, and no more boarders appeared. Looking over the side he could see three of the boats paddling away, with wounded men drowning in the water which filled them to the level of the thwarts. A fourth boat had sunk, pulled down by the weight of her boat-gun. A launch was still alongside, half full of water and loaded with wounded and dead. A man called up that they surrendered.

Capt. Ordroneux faced a trying situation. Seven of his own men had been killed. The poor pilot who was trying to take him in was dead. Twenty-four men were wounded, leaving only nine unhurt on board, in addition to the prisoners. Twenty-eight of the British had been killed and thirty-seven wounded. Some of these were left on board the brigantine, others were in the boats.

One by one twenty-eight captives were added to the thirty-seven already in irons below. They were kept in gangs in separate quarters. All that day the calm continued, and the next. The *Endymion* could not get up and had no boats left.

Expecting every moment a renewal of the attack Capt. Ordroneux on the second day determined to relieve his ship of the encumbrance of wounded and prisoners. Stretching a sail abaft the main hatch he had two boys stamp around behind it, playing "Yankee Doodle" on the fife and drum with all their might. The six remaining men of the crew released the prisoners in small batches and made them help get the wounded into the boats and ferry them ashore. After many trips the ship was cleared, and, a breeze springing up, she made her way into port.

But the pitcher that goes often to the well gets broken at last. A few weeks later the *Prince de Neufchatel* crossed the Atlantic to prey on British commerce again, this time in the Mediterranean. Seventeen different men-of-war chased her at various times, and she got away; but she fell in with a British squadron off the coast of Portugal and was taken and sent into Gibraltar in December, 1814.

The British navy got her as the British navy got the submarines a century later. But it should always be remembered that the most rascally privateer in the period of 1812 was as an angel of light compared with the Hun sewer-rats who assassinated nurses and wounded soldiers and unarmed sailors and stokers with their submarines in the Great War. Capt. Ordroneux and his *Prince de Neufchatel* are not for one moment to be classed with such vermin.

XVII

Taken Before Breakfast

The captain stood on the carronade:
"First lieutenant," says he,
"Send all my merry men aft here,
for they must list to me.
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons
—because I am bred to the sea.
That ship there is a pirate, who
means to fight with we,
And odds, bobs, hammer and tongs,
long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but
I've gained the victory.

"That ship there is a pirate, and if
we don't take she,
'Tis a thousand bullets to one that
she will capture we.
I haven't the gift of the gab, my
boys, so each man to his gun;
If she's not mine in half an hour,
I'll flog every mother's son;
For odds, bobs, hammer and tongs,
long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and
I've gained the victory."

We fought for twenty minutes, when
the pirate had enough.
"I little thought," said he, "that your
men were of such stuff."
Our captain took the pirate's sword,
a low bow made to he,
"I haven't the gift of the gab, sir,
but polite I wish to be,
And odds, bobs, hammer and tongs,
long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and
I've gained the victory!"

Our captain sent for all of us; "My
merry men," said he,
"I haven't the gift of the gab, my
lads, but yet I thankful be,
You've done your dooty handsomely,
each man stood to his gun;
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure
as day, I'd have flogged each
mother's son,
For odds, bobs, hammer and tongs,
as long as I'm at sea,
I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll
gain the victory!"

—Capt. Marryat

WHEN the sun came up on the morning of August 12, 1813, his first rays flamed back in red from the rounded topsails of the British brig-of-war *Pelican,* Capt. John Fordyce Maples, standing into Cork harbor in the south of Ireland.

Welcome was the sight of Erin's green shores to the sailors of the *Pelican,* for the last land they had seen was the palm-fringed beaches and volcanic skylines of the West Indies, and weeks of weary sea-tossing lay between.

At half-past six the anchor bit the bottom and the crew swarmed aloft for the final smooth-finished "harborfurl" of the weather-bleached canvas. But while they were on the footropes swigging the gaskets taut a cutter dashed alongside through the gathering fleet of bumboats and other shore craft.

"A pirate or something on the coast!" ran the rumor from cutter to quarterdeck, from quarterdeck to forecastle, and up the rigging and all over the ship. "Nineteen merchantmen taken in a month, right in the chops of the Channel and the Irish Sea!"

"Aloft there!" came the hail from the deck. "Avast

furling and cast loose the gaskets again. Sheet home the foretops'l and all hands unmoor!"

"All hands unmoor!" the cry resounded. With a clink-clink-clink of windlass pawls the *Pelican's* scarce-wet cable was hove in again, the sails rose to their old places on the tapering spars, and home despatches were tossed into the shore-boat. When eight bells struck the British brig was breasting the billows once more, with the living green of the emerald hills of Ireland fading astern and the Welsh mountains rising dimly over the bow.

All day the long brass "spyglasses" of the blue-coated officers swept the Irish Sea; but the wind fell light and the water passed slowly under the keel, and never a sail could they see save the tarred and tanned wings of paltry fishing smacks.

It was evening on the second day before the trail of the marauder was discovered. Then, as the crimson orb of the sun rested on the sea rim stretched above the vanished Irish shore the pale east burned with another gleam. In the gathering twilight it illumined the whole horizon; a brig from Oporto, deep-laden with sherry and port and madeira for Bristol merchants, was roaring up in flames. She had been captured, plundered and set on fire after the best of her cargo had been taken out by this daring interloper into British waters.

" 'Twas no pirate at all, but an American brig-of-war with twenty guns," declared part of the wine-brig's crew, who had escaped in a small boat. "The *Argus* is her name. We were her twentieth prize, they said. The crew broached the old port they took out of us, and we got away in the long-boat while they were singing 'Yankee Doodle Dandy'."

Wine and wine-brig burned in many colors till the hissing waters swallowed both; but even after the ship went down the remnants of her cargo blazed in a shimmering mantle of flame on the sea's surface.



THE *PELICAN*.—Not an actual portrait of the conqueror of the *Argus*, but a photograph of an immediate descendant with a strong family resemblance. The original of this picture was a Plymouth brig-of-war. There have been many *Pelicans* in the British Navy. The first was in Drake's time, in 1577. The last was launched at Devonport in 1877, exactly three hundred years later. She was a sister ship of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford's *Condor*, and was in commission until 1900, when she was sold to the Hudson Bay Company, and the name disappeared from the navy list.

All night the *Pelican* prodded the darkness for further traces of the raider. In the morning the lead-line told of the approach to the coast of Wales.

"We'll be getting in on the Bishop and Clerks," said Capt. Maples, mindful of the rocks which menace the approach to the shores of Pembrokeshire. "Stand on for two more glasses, and then we must ratch back."

Ere the second glass had run out another red spot bit a hole in the dusk. It bore too much to the north to be the rising sun; but it grew with the growing light of morn, and dawn revealed another ship ablaze—and an American brig scurrying away from it under all sail!

Before six o'clock that morning of the fourteenth of August the *Pelican* was up with the intruder, each ship standing to the westward with the south wind over the port beam. St. David's Head, on the coast of Wales, was fifteen miles to the eastward.

The *Argus,* the American brig, showed no desire to avoid a conflict. She was, indeed, a seasoned battler of the United States navy, Boston-built, heavily-sparred, strong and fast.

The *Argus* had taken part in the running fight with the *Belvidera* the year before, when commanded by Lieut. Arthur Sinclair, and had been one of Rodger's squadron in the wildgoose chase of the Jamaica "plate fleet." She was now commanded by Capt. Wm. H. Allen, formerly first lieutenant with Commodore Decatur in the frigate *United States.* Allen had been highly praised by that officer for his conduct in the action with the *Macedonian;* and aboard this new command of his he had, as souvenirs of that battle, two of the unfortunate *Macedonian's* twelve-pounders.

The *Argus* had left New York on June 18, with the Hon. Wm. H. Crawford, late Senator from Georgia

and newly appointed Minister to France, on board. After landing him in L'Orient on July 11, she had been prowling at the very entrance to Britain's western ports, a wolf at the door, with the results already told.

At six o'clock the battle opened, the vessels firing broadside for broadside within range for grape and canister shot—less than 200 yards. The *Argus* used those terrible bundles of bayonets, tied with rope yarn, and meant to open out and spread like buckshot, mowing down men and ripping away rigging; but her gunner's aim was worse than their weapons, and her discharges flew overhead.

At 6.05 Capt. Allen, of the *Argus,* was struck in the left thigh by a grapeshot from the *Pelican.* It was a terrible wound, but he would not leave the deck. In a few minutes he fainted from loss of blood.

The British broadsides came like thunderclaps. The *Pelican* was no yacht like the *Peacock,* nor marine hospital like the *Epervier,* but a workmanlike ship with a workmanlike captain; less heroic, perhaps, than the pride of Plymouth, the *Reindeer,* but quite as hard a nut to crack in even combat. And the *Argus* was, all in all, just about her match.

The catalogue of damage to the *Argus* tells a seaman the progress of the destroying *Pelican* as her batteries bore from aft forward. First went the *Argus'* mainbraces—spliced too often, as the British tars grimly said; then her main spring-stay, gaff and trysail mast. All this was after-gear. As the *Pelican* ranged ahead she shot away the spritsail yard and the port fore-rigging.

Lieutenant Watson, succeeding in command of the *Argus,* was stunned by a grapeshot five minutes after

Capt. Allen fell. The second lieutenant, Mr. H. U. Allen—not related to the commander—then took charge. Capt. Maples tried to steer the *Pelican* across the wake of the *Argus* so as to sternrake her. Lieut. Allen promptly luffed his vessel and backed his maintopsail, holding the *Argus* almost stationary, facing the foe and so defeating the manoeuvre.

The *Argus,* now placed directly across the *Pelican's* bows, delivered a raking broadside in turn. It should have been deadly. But the grape with which the *Argus* gunners were immediately familiar grew on Portuguese hillsides, not in cannon foundries. The shots went everywhere except on the target. A canister ball hit Capt. Maples in the breast. As though the sailor were a superman, it dropped to the deck, and the British commander nonchalantly stooped and picked it up, along with his splintered waistcoat buttons.

Another *Pelican* broadside brought down the *Argus'* maintopsail, and she fell off before the wind, losing her dangerous raking position. Methodically as a reaper in the swath, Capt. Maples swung the *Pelican* back and forth across the enemy's track, raking her from stern to stem and shooting away her wheelropes; then sailing around her and raking her from stem to stern.

The unmanageable *Argus* could now only drift to leeward. Placing his vessel directly in her path, Capt. Maples waited till her bowsprit speared across his bulwarks. Then "Boarders away!" he called through the trumpet.

William Young, master's mate of the *Pelican,* was the first to scale the hostile brig's bows. As he crossed

the gunwale an American marine in her foretop fired down on him, giving him his death-wound. But his British messmates, swinging cutlass and boarding pike, clambered into the spot from which he fell; and as they came the Stars and Stripes were hauled down by some of the *Argus* crew on her littered quarterdeck.

Six of the *Argus* men had been killed and eighteen wounded. William Young and one other were killed on board the *Pelican* and five were wounded.

The battle lasted forty-five minutes. There were more men in the American vessel than in her captor. She had one hundred and twenty-five to the *Pelican's* crew of 101 men and 12 boys. The *Pelican* had the same number of guns as the *Argus,* but a heavier broadside—280 pounds to 228. The *Argus* was the smaller, but smarter. She measured 316 English tons to the *Pelican's* 385, and she was four feet shorter and three feet narrower. But she was more heavily built, and in proof of her proportionately larger sail plan the naval historian, James, mentions that despite the difference in tonnage her mainyard, measuring 55 feet 2 inches, was seven inches longer than the *Pelican's.*

Poor Capt. Allen was taken with his captured vessel into Plymouth. Capt. Maples was a humane man, and he sent Capt. Allen's own surgeon along with him, and gave him all the comfort he could. Instead of cramming the *Argus* with wounded and prisoners, he took half of her complement into his own vessel and sailed with them for Cork again, for he had not fulfilled his commission there. But in spite of all that could be done the American commander died in Mill Prison hospital, in Plymouth, four days after he lost his ship. His left leg was amputated at the thigh by

the *Argus* surgeon. Full naval honors, and the attendance of all the officers of the ships of war in port marked the funeral of the American raider who had helped capture the British frigate *Macedonian* and who had destroyed twenty-one ships in British waters —but who was remembered only as a gallant foe, fallen far from home.

Capt. Maples was made a post-captain for his prompt performance of his duty, which was about the equivalent of promoting a colonel in the army to the rank of general; but what he did with the Stars and Stripes he made the *Argus* haul down before breakfast that August morning, or in what dusky hiding place they now hang, we have never heard.

Britons have been careless about such matters. As Dr. MacMechan, of Halifax, says, in reference to the hundreds of merchant and naval prizes carried into that port, "What became of their flags no one knows. They were probably regarded at the time as so much unserviceable bunting."

XVIII

Grit and Grog

EXULTANT pride may every Britisher feel in the exploit of the *Pelican*. 'Twas swift assertion, in her own gates, of Britain's charge and charter:

Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!

The capture of the *Argus* by the *Pelican* was a better and braver piece of work than the capture of the British *Peacock* by the *Hornet,* or the capture of the *Epervier* by the American *Peacock,* or the capture of the *Reindeer* by the *Wasp*. In none of these instances was there lack of brilliancy and bravery on the part of the American victors, but while in all four cases victory was with the heavier ship, in the triumph of the *Pelican* the two parties were nearer equality than in any of the others.

The *Pelican* and *Argus* were equal in the number of their guns. If the *Argus* had more men, the *Pelican* had a heavier broadside. If the *Pelican's* tonnage was greater, the *Argus* had more sail area and, in the weather that prevailed, more speed. It is to the *Argus'* credit that she could have run away from the fight and did not try.

In exultant pride is the sea-battle of August 14, 1813, recounted, and in no spirit of insult to the people for a century since our friends. With the same absence of intention of insult we may examine the circumstances of the *Argus'* capture; neither to point a moral nor to adorn a tale, but to get at the facts. And if,

O ye dwellers under the Stars and Stripes and the Volstead Act, you are less proud of the record of the *Argus* than of other of your ships, remember to be not altogether scornful of the almshouse refugees of the British *Epervier* who bleated, "She is too heavy for us!" when their brave captain tried to board the American *Peacock;* and exult not overmuch that the British *Peacock* crumpled up like the butterfly that she was, when attacked by your more powerful *Hornet.* In every combat fought between British and Americans in the War of 1812, no matter which flag won at the time, there was always enough bravery on both sides to redeem whatever elements of weakness entered into the defeat of the loser.

"Fatigue after taking and destroying so many prizes," is the explanation offered by an American officer for the poor shooting of the *Argus* men. The incident of the spent ball, which only knocked the buttons off the British captain's waistcoat, might support the theory of a poor powder supply. But the *Argus* had more powder left after the action than the *Pelican* had when she began it; and as she had only left New York two months before, her supply had not had time to deteriorate. Her powder was good enough for her commander to keep her in the track of British commerce and to destroy twenty-one British vessels.

The *Argus* had six men killed and eighteen wounded, five of whom afterwards died. The casualty list seems a small result for 45 minutes' cannonading at distances varying from 200 yards to immediate contact; but the larger American crew, with an equal number of guns, only killed two of the *Pelican's* men and wounded five in those same forty-five minutes!

The plain truth seems to be that the Oporto wine-brig she captured and plundered on August 13 sealed the fate of the *Argus* on August 14. Capt. Allen's discipline may have been as high as his courage, and his skill as great as both, but all three were not proof against the effect of madeira, port and sherry on the hands and heads of his American gun crews.

The *Pelican* could have taken the *Argus,* drunk or sober; but the *Argus* would not have struck with more than one hundred of her crew unhurt and less than one hundred British sailors behind the invading boarding pikes and cutlasses if the hundred unwounded men on the *Argus's* decks had been able to stand on their feet.

"American sailors want no grog," was one of the boasts of the day, not always justified. It is said to have been made when the *Constitution* was going into action. British victors found the American sloop-of-war *Frolic* in a state of pillage when they captured her, April 20, 1814. The crew had taken charge when the commander, despairing of escape, childishly threw his pennant overboard. Discipline was at an end.

James, the British historian, is more critical of the petty spirit which partially dismantled the vessel after she had been made a fair prize, but he does not leave the impression that her crew were sober.

So, too, Haliburton, who as a boy saw the *Chesapeake* when she was brought into Halifax after battle, relates how some of her men were "lying asleep on the bloody floor, as if they had fallen in action and expired where they lay." He opined that liquor had been handed to them through the ports by visitors in boats; but the assertion has been made that before the action New England rum and Pennsylvania whiskey made

the rounds repeatedly in the *Chesapeake,* and that her gunnery showed the effects of it. The *Chesapeake's* shooting was not as good as the *Shannon's,* but it was much better than that displayed by the *Argus.*

More definite examples of the antics of John Barleycorn under the Stars and Stripes are given by the master and mate of the British snow *Daphne,* of



AN EARLY "SNOW."

From the model in the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, dated 1690. Later varieties of this rig had jibs and such modern head canvas. A gentleman interested in such matters—Mr. Aemilius Jarvis, of Toronto—recalls having seen a "snow" in the Downs in 1876. She was a French vessel, and more than a hundred years old then; probably the last survivor of the now extinct type. The sail hanging in front of the "snow" in the picture is a "spritsail." Like the whole snow rig, it is also obsolete. If the spritsail can be borne in mind the reader may be helped to understand the *Guerriere's* last desperate manoeuvre, described in an earlier chapter.

Whitby, who were held as prisoners aboard the American frigate *President* for a time. A "snow" was a vessel with two square-rigged masts and a lateen mizzen, a rig long since extinct. The word was originally pronounced to rhyme with "cow."

The *Daphne* was taken by the *President* when

Commodore Rodgers had the latter on another commerce destruction cruise in July, 1813. He passed north around the coasts of Britain and took up a position off the North Cape to intercept the British merchant fleet homeward bound from Archangel. By chance he had the assistance of the large American privateer schooner *Scourge,* of New York, which had taken part in the capture of 22 trading vessels at different times in the North Sea.

The men of the Whitby snow were without doubt not witnesses prejudiced in favor of things American. They tell, with some gusto, how on July 19 two sails were sighted and identified as British men-of-war. The prisoners confirmed the identification, but knew they were only small vessels. The *President* and *Scourge* kept away, believing themselves in the presence of a line-of-battle ship and frigate! The midnight sun enabled the audacious pursuers to continue their chase day and night, and four times, in the five days the chase lasted, they got within six miles of the *President.*

When this would happen, the prisoners recorded, immense quantities of star, chain and bar shot would be got on deck and a treble allowance of grog would be served out to the crew. Finally the *President* dropped the enemy; but one more serving of triple-grog and dismantling shot was made almost immediately afterwards, when another "line-of-battle ship" was sighted. As this last one rose above the horizon her tryworks and whaleboats on the davits reassured the commodore, and he boldly put about—and captured the *Eliza Swan,* whaler, of Dundee!

Examination of the logs of the British navy proves

beyond doubt that the vessels which pursued the *President* from July 19 at night till early in the morning of July 23, 1813, were the little 12-pounder frigate *Alexandria,* Capt. Robt. Cathcart, a vessel of 32 guns, and the 16-gun sloop-of-war *Spitfire,* Capt. John Ellis. The *President* mounted at the time 56 guns, the lightest of them heavier than the heaviest of her pursuers, and some of them of treble the calibre of the *Alexandria's* principal batteries.

The *President* measured 1,576 tons. The frigate pursuing her measured 662 tons and the sloop 422 tons; neither of them very much of an overmatch for the privateer schooner *Scourge,* and combined they would not have made a mouthful for the *President.* It is hard to understand how either the *Alexandria* or the *Spitfire* could have been mistaken, even at a distance of six miles, for a two-decked line-of-battle ship or a heavy frigate, vessels three or four times their size. Had they succeeded in getting within two miles the *President* could have sunk them both with one broadside.

Drink, of course, was not the cause of Commodore Rodgers' mistaken caution, but treble allowance of grog for the eighty hours the chase lasted must have left the crew incapable of fighting the ship to the best advantage. The Archangel fleet of thirty sail, like the Jamaica fleet of 100 sail, escaped Commodore Rodger's clutches.

James says, when describing the capture of Capt. David Porter's command, the American frigate *Essex*:

"When the *Essex* was boarded by the British officers, buckets of spirits were found in all parts of the main deck, and most of the prisoners were in a state of

intoxication. This decided proof that 'American sailors want no grog' accounts for the *Phoebe* and *Cherub* having sustained their principal injury during the first three broadsides. Afterwards the firing of the *Essex* became very irregular, and nearly all of her shot went over the British ships."

Of course, it was a drinking age. The Pretty Poll or Black-Eyed Sue of "Wapping Old Stairs" sings for her Sweet William,

"Your trousers I'd wash and your grog I'd prepare;"

and that was for the time an appealing picture of domestic bliss for the sailor. But the British tar seems to have suffered less from liquor than his American cousin. Dispassionate and not inconsiderable examination of the incidents of the War of 1812 fails to show, on the British side, the parallels of the instances of American intoxication quoted. The very opposite is on record.

In February, 1814, the British frigate *Pique,* Capt. James Maitland, sighted a vessel in the Mona Passage, in the West Indies and stood down until she identified her as that most formidable ship in the United States navy, the frigate *Constitution,* or "Old Ironsides."

The *Pique* was armed with eighteen-pounders, the *Constitution* with twenty-fours; and ship for ship the American was at least 50 per cent. heavier.

The British Admiralty had by this time very properly issued strict orders that eighteen-pounder frigates were not to voluntarily engage twenty-four-pounders. When the *Constitution* was identified and her force was known Capt. Maitland called his crew aft and explained that his orders were peremptory about not

seeking an engagement. Apparently he intimated that there was no harm in waiting, because there was nothing in the orders to prevent him fighting if attacked. The crew accordingly decided not to take their supper-time grog.

Roosevelt has burlesqued the incident, intimating that the British crew were doing a bit of stageplay and attempting to express a disappointment they did not feel. But the explanation given by a writer two generations before Roosevelt, who had the facts first hand, seems simpler. "The crew refused to take their supper-time grog, alleging as a reason 'that they did not want Dutch courage to fight a Yankee frigate.'" (James' "Naval History.") The gun crews of the *Pique* were not pious prohibitionists, but they valued cool heads and steady hands when faced with odds of three to two.

In the morning the *Constitution* had vanished. Capt. Stewart, who commanded her at this time, had counted thirteen ports and a bridle in the *Pique's* main deck, and it has been said, probably incorrectly, that he thought she was a twenty-four-pounder like his own vessel, and therefore avoided a conflict. That does not ring true to the traditions of "Old Ironsides" or the reputation of Capt. Charles Stewart, who was a courageous and skilful fighting man. The fact seems to have been that both ships wanted to fight, but were wary of the chances of a night action; and during the night they lost sight of one another.

This was the cruise of the *Constitution* in which she captured and destroyed the 14-gun schooner *Picton,* with 75 men, off Barbados on St. Valentine's Day. The *Constitution* was chased into Marble-

head, when she arrived off there on April 3, by the British frigates *Junon* and *Tenedos.* This was, as may be remembered, not the first time she saved herself by flight. She again escaped by jettisoning her water and stores. The *Tenedos* wanted to follow her into Marblehead, but Capt. Upton, of the *Junon,* senior officer, recalled him.

Nelson, himself abstemious, knew what to do with grog. On the morning of Trafalgar, says Edward Fraser in his "Sailors Whom Nelson Led," some of the men were offering a guinea for a glass of grog—and a guinea was a large proportion of all the prize-money many of the seamen got for their work in the capture of the combined French and Spanish fleets. One pound seventeen shillings was the ordinary share!

Nelson gave them no grog, but "ordered bread and cheese and butter and beer for every man at the guns." Beer was as much an article of diet then as tea or coffee to-day. It had been the standard drink in the navy from Drake's time onward. Under the awful conditions which prevailed regarding the water supplies it was the only safe drink until lime-juice appeared.

It was about 1740 that Admiral Vernon, "Six Ships Vernon," introduced grog into the navy and gave it its name.

The merits of a mixture of rum-and-water appealed to that tough old salt, who, in addition to his "Six Ships" nickname, was also known as "Old Grog," from his incurable fondness for wearing a grogram boat-cloak. As Vice-Admiral of the Blue he captured Porto Bello castle and town with six ships, Nov. 22, 1739, losing only seven men; but his later encounters

with the Spaniards in the West Indies were less fortunate. Vernon's innovation in the matter of drink, it should be noted, was not adding rum to the water, but water to the rum. That "hellish liquor," as old chroniclers called it, had been consumed neat hitherto by West Indian crews—when they could get it. Vernon changed it from an occasional indulgence to a regular ration of some hygienic merit at the time.

Grog was not the foundation of the British navy's greatness, nor was it the weak link in the United States navy's chain of success. That chain snapped with the capture of the *Chesapeake,* and was never re-shackled. The grog incidents mentioned are only episodes of passing interest in a great struggle with greater issues and greater results.

Britain won the War of 1812 at sea, not through the grog-tub, but through the genius of such men as Broke of the *Shannon,* the heroism of such men as Manners of the *Reindeer,* the methodical workmanship of such men as Hillyar of the *Phoebe* and Maples of the *Pelican.*

Behind these was the bulldog grit of the British sailor, who, whether a volunteer or dragged from his job by the pressgang, lived hard, fought hard and died hard, for wages that would insult a Chinaman, smart-money that would not pay postage on a workman's compensation claim, and prize-money which in the average hardly paid for the clothes he wore out in action.

By his cheerful comradeship he made men out of the jailbirds and shoresweepings gathered up with him in the pressgang's net. By his patient endurance of hardships which horrify the mere enumerator—weev-

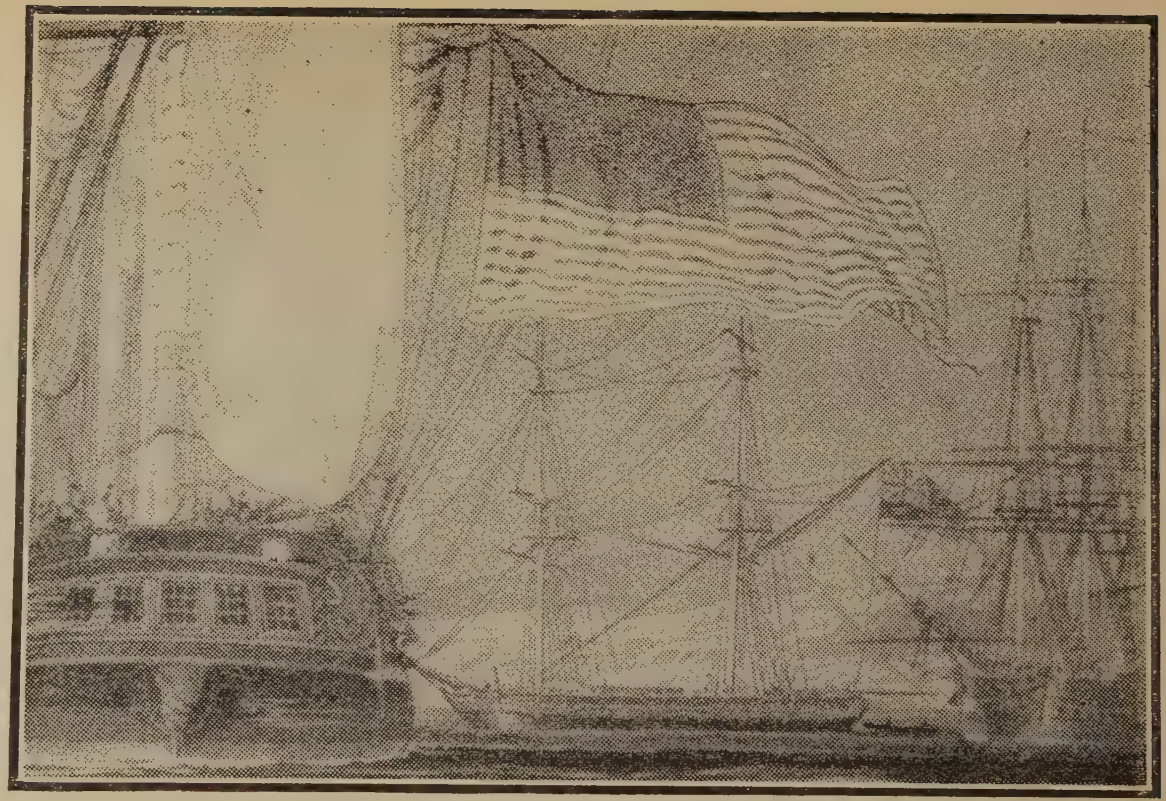
ily biscuits—filthy drinking water—'tween-decks, stifling in the tropics, fireless in the North Atlantic—amputation without anaesthetics the only treatment for injured members—flogging for the last man down from aloft—he made and kept for the world the Freedom of the Seas; for where the flag of Britain is, there is liberty.

The Captains of 1812 were great men. They were leaders of great men—the Tars of Eighteen-Twelve.

Men like the master and mate of the *Guerriere,* who were sure, months after their drubbing by the *Constitution,* that their own rotten old wreck could beat the pick of the American fleet if they only had another chance; men like the *Guerriere's* crew, who set the spritsail on the bowsprit to carry on the battle against an intact enemy after all three of their masts were gone; men like the gunner of the *Reindeer,* who went on fighting after having a ramrod blown into his skull; men like the greenhorns of the *Java,* who, when the enemy hauled off to refill cartridges, cheered as the Americans passed, called to them to come back, and rigged up jury sails to bring their dismantled hulk, into action again!

And boys like the ten-year-old youngster in the *Dominica,* who took two bullet wounds when the *Decatur* boarded his vessel; or like Edward Keele, thirteen year old middy in the *Java,* who could not die happily until the surgeon told him that the flag which covered his poor mangled body was still the Union Jack!

These, not the grog tub, made the British Navy great.



H.M.S. *BOXER* IN HALIFAX HARBOR.

A reasonably certain portrait of the lost British vessel. The reproduction is from a fragment of Capt. King's fine picture of the *Chesapeake* being brought in by the *Shannon*. While the vessel shown under the *Chesapeake's* flag is not labelled in the picture, it is known that the *Boxer* was anchored in the port at the time, and the rig and size of the brig in the picture correspond accurately with the *Boxer's* dimensions.

XIX.

The Nailed Colors of the *Boxer*

"I remember the sea fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide;
And the dead captains as they lay
In their graves o'erlooking the tranquil bay,
Where they in battle died."

—Longfellow.

"THE crew of the *Boxer;* enemies by law, but by gallantry brothers."

This toast at a naval dinner in New York in the autumn of 1813 gives a snapshot of the feeling which animated the best hearts on both sides in the last war forever between Britain and the United States.

It is eloquent of the emotions of brave men, believing in the justice of their respective causes but not blind to the valor with which the opposite cause was upheld. "So great is the force of virtue," ran the old sentence in the Latin exercise book, "that we respect it even in an enemy." It was by virtue of the blood they shed and the blows they gave and received, and not through professions of international goodwill and generalities about the solidarity of the misnamed Anglo-Saxon race, that the ship's company of His Britannic Majesty's brig *Boxer* won the tribute quoted.

When Capt. Lawrence, of the *Chesapeake,* was buried in Halifax in June, 1813, one of his pallbearers was a tall young man of thirty in captain's uniform—Samuel Blyth, of the *Boxer,* a British brig-of-war

then lying in the harbor. Blyth had then been nineteen years in the navy. He went to sea as a boy of eleven, and at that age, in 1794, went through Lord Howe's—"Black Dick" Howe's—great five-day "Battle of the First of June," when six French sail of the line struck and one was sunk. The ship in which this child served was severely mauled, and his life for the nineteen years which followed was a long round of battles and hard service; yet the command of a paltry brig-sloop was the highest reward it had given him.

The *Boxer* was neither small enough to be nimble nor large enough to be dangerous. She had been built in a hurry in the Isle of Wight in 1812. She measured 181 tons. After the unwise fashion of her time she was crammed with cannon—twelve 18-pounder carronades and two long nines—and robbed of sufficient crew to work them properly. She was allowed eighty-eight men and boys. These had to fight her fourteen guns behind bulwarks consisting of a shell of inner and outer planking, separated by stanchions; bulwarks which were not proof against grape, nor even against bullets. As for cannonballs, they would go through like clowns through a hoop of paper.

The *Boxer* was kept cruising about the New England coast after the *Chesapeake* was taken, now and then chasing a Yankee privateer or picking up a homeward bound merchantman. The morale aboard her was no higher than might have been expected from her general condition. Capt. Blyth and his officers seemed unable to translate personal zeal and bravery into that tip-toe pitch of proficiency which Capt. Broke passed on to the *Shannon* crew.

Accordingly, on the morning of Sept. 5, 1813, the *Boxer* was riding comfortably at anchor inside Penguin Point, on the hostile coast of Maine. Monhegan Island was in the distance. Some of her crew were away in prizes she had taken. The surgeon and two midshipmen, and an army officer who had come aboard as a passenger, had gone ashore for a day's pigeon-shooting. Maine was more of a wilderness then than to-day; wild pigeons abounded, and inhabitants were few and not always hostile to King's officers with plenty of guineas.

As the September sun ate up the morning mists the vigilant man at the masthead saw something on the eastern horizon.

"Sail ho!" he hailed the deck, and forthwith the *Boxer* began to get up her anchor. Not a moment was lost and at half-past seven she was standing seaward to investigate the stranger, with the four officers left behind in the woods.

The promptness was justified, for the newcomer revealed herself as another brig-of-war, larger than the *Boxer* by twenty tons or so, armed with two more guns, and much more heavily rigged.

She was the United States brig *Enterprise,* built in Baltimore in 1799, a veteran of the Tripolitan war. She had been changed from a schooner to a brig and, like the *Boxer,* was rather overloaded with cannon. She had fourteen 18-pounder carronades and two long nines; but, unlike the *Boxer,* whose inadequate original crew was now reduced to sixty men and six boys, the *Enterprise* had plenty of men—one hundred and twenty—to handle her armament.

She was commanded by Lieutenant Wm. Burrows.

THE *BOXER'S* ENSIGN

In the collection of trophy flags at the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. It is a red ensign, 17 feet 8 inches long and 9 feet 3 inches wide. The five holes in the hoist, or inner edge of it, were possibly made by the spikes which nailed it to the *Boxer's* mast.

He, too, had been in the Tripolitan war of 1804. He was 28 years of age and had been in the service of his country for years. Lack of opportunity in the navy, or, in other words, inability to live on peace-pay, had sent him on a trading voyage to China ere the war began. On his homeward voyage he had been captured by a British cruiser and was exchanged in June, 1813. He had obtained command of the *Enterprise* and had sailed with her from Portsmouth, N.H., on Sept. 1, to drive away the Nova Scotian and New Brunswick privateers that were hovering on the New England coast.

The *Boxer* promptly flung three banners to the breeze and accepted the odds against herself. The northwest wind gave her the weather gauge and she boldly stood for the foe. "Never, while there is life in my body, shall those colors be struck!" declared young Blyth, as the folds of the Union Jack blew out from truck and peak. To make assurance doubly sure he ordered men aloft to nail the flags to the mastheads.

The *Enterprise* also threw out three ensigns, and Lieut. Burrows registered a similar vow. The two long nine-pounders in his ship were fitted in bridle-ports, as bow chasers. He ordered one of them to be taken out and hauled aft and pointed through one of the stern ports. He was new to the ship and crew, and they watched the proceedings with misgivings. Was he going to run away? His set lips made all hesitate to put the question, but he answered it unasked: "WE are going to fight both ends and both sides of this ship as long as the ends and the sides hold together."

Then the soft September breeze, as though reluc-

tant to bring these brave young men into mortal combat, fluttered away and vanished in a whisper, leaving the two brigs swaying idly, four miles apart, on the polished surface of the ocean, their bright flags drooping in long slim lines of color from their spars.

It was at noon that the wind died. After a time, as though forgetting its reluctance it came in again from a new quarter, the southwest. Again the manoeuvering began. The new direction gave the American ship the weather gauge, and at three o'clock, with colors flying, she closed with the British brig, both ships being on the starboard tack, the *Enterprise* to windward.

They drew together until only half a pistol-shot separated them—a murderous proximity. Then each crew cheered loudly and fired their broadside guns.

In the first discharge each commander fell. An eighteen-pound shot tore off Capt. Blyth's left arm and went through his body as he stood on his quarter-deck staring through the smoke to windward. On board the American ship Lieut. Burrows was in the act of heaving on a tackle with the gun crew, one leg braced against the bulwarks to give him leverage. A canister shot struck him in the thigh. He fell on the deck bleeding to death and lay there, refusing to be carried to the surgeon. "The colors must never come down! The colors must never come down!" he kept repeating.

The *Enterprise's* broadsides ripped through the *Boxer's* defences. Even the musketry fire of the American marines went through the flimsy bulwarks and killed the men at the guns. Four men flinched—Hugh James, an acting master's mate, and three sea-

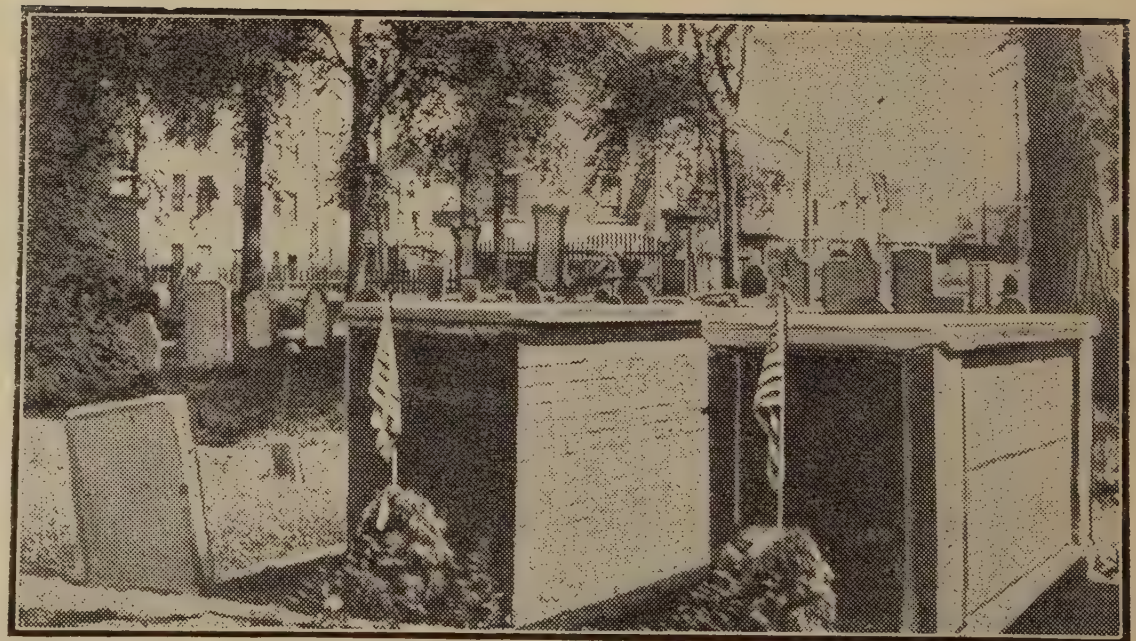
men. They ran below, to save their worthless lives for a court-martial later. But the others fought on, cheering loudly as they toiled and sweated at the smoking guns.

The ships ran side by side for fifteen minutes, from 3.15 to 3.30, exchanging half a dozen broadsides. Lieut. David McCreery had taken the dead commander's place on the *Boxer's* quarterdeck, and the *Enterprise* was being fought by her first officer, Lieut. McColl. She ranged ahead and he drove her across the *Boxer's* bows, firing into her from the nine-pounder Lieut. Burrows had shifted to the stern for that very purpose. Then, hauling sharp on the starboard tack, the *Enterprise* rounded to, slowly crossing the poor *Boxer's* bows again and raking her for her whole length.

Down came the *Boxer's* maintopmast and her foretopsail yard, leaving her no sail aloft and her lower canvas in ribbons; but still the British cheers of her surviving crew drowned the shrieks of the wounded for whom there was no surgeon, and still the battered guns belched back broadside for broadside.

The spars came down at 3.35. At 3.40 the *Enterprise,* setting her foresail, drew out in a position on the *Boxer's* starboard bow, where the British guns would not bear. For ten minutes—from 3.35 to 3.45—the hapless brig stood the heavy raking fire. The two flags on her mainmast had dropped with the fall of the spars; the flag on the foremast could not be lowered because it had been nailed. But the guns ceased; and a tablecloth, waved from the main-rigging, told the story of surrender.

Twenty-seven cannon balls had gone through the



WHERE CAPT. BLYTH, R.N., AND LIEUT. COMMANDER BURROWS, U.S.N., SLEEP SIDE BY SIDE

in the old cemetery at Portland, Me., each alike marked on the American Decoration Day with a wreath and the Stars and Stripes. Capt. Blyth's grave is to the left, Lieut. Burrows' to the right.

Boxer. She had three eighteen-pound shot in her mainmast, and it was ready to fall. Nine of the balls which had pierced her were from the nine-pounder which Lieut. Burrows had shifted astern or from its mate in the bow. The *Boxer's* upper works and sides forward were torn to pieces with grape and cannister. Her own grapeshot had been unable to pierce the solid bulwarks of the *Enterprise,* built with stanchions and planking all in one mass of oak of uniform thickness. She had put one eighteen-pounder shot through the American's foremast, and another through her mainmast; but as the latter was fifteen inches greater in circumference than the *Boxer's,* it was not seriously damaged.

Lieut. Burrows lay in his blood till they brought him the sword of the dead Capt. Blyth. Then he murmured: "I am satisfied. I die contented," and they carried his body down to his cabin. The shattered ships steered for Portland, Me. The two young captains were buried in one burial and with all the honors that the port could show.

They still sleep side by side in what is known as the Eastern Cemetery, Portland, a burying ground laid out in 1668. The place is well kept on the whole. The commanders are evidently regarded impartially on the American Decoration Day, for on the little iron support holding an evergreen wreath tied with white and blue flies a Stars and Stripes at both graves.

On Capt. Blyth's stone is the following:

"In memory of Capt. Samuel Blyth, late commander of his Britannic Majesty's brig *Boxer.*

"He nobly fell on the 5th day of Septem-

ber, 1813, in action with the U.S. brig *Enterprise.*

"In life honourable, in death glorious, his country will long deplore one of her bravest sons, his friends long lament one of the best men. Aet. 29. The surviving officers of his crew offer this goodly tribute of admiration and respect."

The inscription on Lieut. Burrows' stone says:

"Beneath this stone moulders the body of William Burrows, late commander of the United States brig *Enterprise,* who was mortally wounded on the 5th of September, 1813, in an action which contributed to increase the fame of American valor by capturing his Britannic Majesty's brig *Boxer,* after a severe contest of 45 minutes. Aet. 28.

"A passing stranger has erected this monument of respect to the name of a patriot who in the hour of peril obeyed the loud summons of an injured country and who gallantly met, fought and conquered the foeman."

The "passing stranger" was Matthew L. Davis, of New York, who, in going through Portland in 1815, two years after the battle, accidentally took a walk through the old Eastern Cemetery. His attention was attracted to the already neglected grave of the gallant Capt. Burrows. The only guide to the place was the tombstone which had been erected by Capt. Blyth's surviving officers. Mr. Davis left instructions to have a fitting memorial to Burrows erected.

Capt. Blyth's monument has been restored to something of its original appearance and its inscription re-



ENSIGN OF THE *QUEEN CHARLOTTE* IN THE BATTLE OF PUT-IN BAY
CAPT. ROBERT HERIOT BARCLAY, R.N.

cut. This was accomplished through the interest of John B. Keating, a British Vice-Consul at Portland.

To the right of Lieut. Burrows' grave is buried Lieut. Kervin Waters,

> "who received a mortal wound Sept. 5, 1813, while a midshipman on board the U.S. brig *Enterprise*.
>
> "He languished in severe pain, which he endured with fortitude, until Sept. 25, 1815, when he died with Christian calmness and resignation, aged 18.
>
> "The young men of Portland erect this stone as a testimony of their respect for his valor and virtue."

How heavy were the *Boxer's* losses in this long-ago battle is hard to determine. Lieut. McColl reported she had "between twenty and thirty-five killed and fourteen wounded." This, if true, would be a tremendous casualty list out of sixty men and six boys. British records only mention four killed and seventeen wounded; but there is some reason to believe that the dead exceeded this number, and that many bodies were thrown overboard in the fight. The sufferings of the wounded were intensified by the absence of the surgeon; although, in those days, before anaesthetics, all wounds meant torture, whether treated by a surgeon or not.

The *Boxer's* shooting was poor, for in spite of the persistency and rapidity of her broadsides the *Enterprise* was not seriously damaged, and she reported only four dead and eight wounded. The grapeshot and musket balls from the *Boxer* were more deadly than her eighteen-pound cannon shot.

The *Enterprise* was always a lucky vessel. At the time of the engagement she was the only one left of the six brigs of the American navy of 1812.

Next year—on the last three days of February, 1814—she was chased by a British frigate for seventy hours, and had to throw overboard fourteen of her sixteen guns to get clear. She escaped into Wilmington, N.C. Under Lieut.-Commander Renshaw she cruised off the southern coast and while on that duty captured the British privateer *Mars,* a well-armed vessel of fourteen long 9-pounders and 75 men, which put up a fight and lost five men killed before surrendering. The *Enterprise* ended her war duty as guardship at Charleston, S.C.

An ensign of the *Boxer* hangs in the United States Naval Academy. It is a red flag of moderate size, 9 feet 3 inches wide and 17 feet 8 inches long. In one corner, less tattered than the rest of the flag, is the Union Jack, on orthodox lines. A piece has been bitten out of the outer edge of the fly, perhaps by a cannon ball, and the bunting shows many small rips and rents elsewhere. It is not certain that this is the flag which was nailed to the mast and could not be lowered; but it is quite easy to find, in the hoist, or edge of the flag that would go next the mast, five small holes, at fairly regular intervals, the spaces between being about eighteen inches distance. It is significant that the uppermost of these holes is about a foot below the upper corner of the hoist. If the holes were made by British spikes there would be no necessity to put one at the top; the signal-halliards, which would be holding the flag in position before it was nailed, would continue to take care of the uppermost corner; and

the uppermost corner would also be difficult for the sailor who swarmed up the mast to reach.

With some pity, some pride, and a great reverence all who think must look upon this faintly crimson memorial of a conflict past and gone, of valor which lives forever. The two young men—both brave, both very moderately rewarded for long years of effort, by native lands which took the best they had to give! The cynic may ask to what purpose did they sacrifice everything, even to life itself. The answer is that each gave his all for an ideal; by their deaths they proved what perhaps their lives had not made plain even to themselves, that courage and endurance and sacrifice and service are compass stars by which every individual and every nation can steer. The commander of the *Boxer* and the commander of the *Enterprise* each sailed a true course for the same objective from different departures.

The two greatest nations of the world honor one another and work together to-day in amity because they respect one another. That respect is founded upon the recognition of each in the other of those qualities which both admire. Recognition of such qualities may be said to have been initiated by such episodes as the chivalry of Capt. Byron of the *Belvidera,* who beat off a whole American squadron and cared for the dying Capt. Southcomb, of the American privateer *Lottery;* and by the gallant and supreme sacrifices of Samuel Blyth and William Burrows, who counted their own lives less dear to them than the honor of the flags under which they served.



CAPT. ROBERT HERIOT BARCLAY, R.N.

From a water color in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, Toronto Public Library.

XX.

When the Red Bunting Ran Out

I.

SCENE, a naval court-martial, in the great cabin of H.M.S. *Gladiator,* Portsmouth, September 16, 1814.

The clean-chinned old seadog at the head of the table is Rear-Admiral Edward James Foote, president.

The young man with the merry black eyes and the high color is Capt. Robert Heriot Barclay, R.N. He is twenty-nine now. His left coat-sleeve is empty, and his right arm is still in bandages. He walks with a limp from an injured thigh. He was wounded eight times in that fight on the tenth of September, 1813, on the Canadian lakes, in the heart of the western wilderness, which Americans call the Battle of Lake Erie and we call the Battle of Put-In Bay. It is for the loss of the squadron of six vessels under his command that he is being tried. The older man in the first lieutenant's uniform, with the raw scars, is Thomas Stokoe, of the *Queen Charlotte.* He got those scars in the combat, and will be the next witness. The young man in the blue-and-white who has just been called for examination is Francis Purvis, a lieutenant in the Provincial Marine of Upper Canada, who fought aboard the young captain's flagship in the battle.

Provincial Lieutenant Francis Purvis, of the *Detroit,* examined:

Q.—"How many experienced seamen had you on board the *Detroit* when the action commenced?"

Lt. Purvis—"To the best of my knowledge, not more than ten, officers included."

Q.—"Can you recollect how many of those ten seamen were killed or wounded?"

Lt. Purvis—"To the best of my recollection, seven or eight were killed or wounded."

Q.—"How near were the enemy to you at the early part of the engagement?"

Lt. Purvis—The *Detroit,* in engaging the *Lawrence,* was within pistol shot of the *Niagara.* The latter came down after the *Lawrence* had struck."

Capt. Barclay asks:

"Were the matches and tubes so bad that were supplied from Amherstburg that I was obliged to prime without the latter, and fired pistols at the guns to set them off?"

Lt. Purvis—"Yes, we fired pistols at the guns to set them off during the whole of the action."

Capt. Barclay—"Why did you not take possession of the *Lawrence* when she struck?"

Lt. Purvis—"We had only one boat and that was cut to pieces, and the *Niagara,* another large brig, being to windward, came down too quickly upon us."

Capt. Barclay—"Did the enemy's gunboats do much damage?"

Lt. Purvis—"More than any of their vessels. They had long two-and-thirties."

Lieutenant Thomas Stokoe, of the *Queen Charlotte,* examined:

Q.—"How many men had you aboard the *Queen Charlotte* you could call experienced seamen?"

Lt. Stokoe—"Not more than ten with the petty officers. We had on board between 120 and 130 men, officers and all together."

Q.—"How many men had you on board that had been accustomed to work the great guns with a ship in motion?"

Lt. Stokoe—"Only the men that came up from the *Dover* three days before we sailed. We had sixteen of them, boys included, from the *Dover;* the rest we had learnt ourselves since our arrival on the lake."

Q.—"Do you know whether the other vessels that composed the squadron of Capt. Barclay were equally deficient in seamen?"

Lt. Stokoe—"All the other vessels were equally deficient in point of seamen, except the *Detroit* might have a few more on account of being a larger vessel."

Q.—"At half allowance how many days' provisions had you on board the *Queen Charlotte* when you went out?"

Lt. Stokoe—"We might have had a week's at half allowance of provisions, but not of spirits; they were preserved for the action and all consumed on that day. We had none served out for several days before."

Q.—"Did you understand that the enemy's vessels were well manned?"

Lt. Stokoe—"Yes, they were remarkably well manned. I believe from the information received from the American officers that the *Lawrence* had more able seamen on board than we had in our whole squadron. I was on board the *Lawrence* about a quarter of an hour and on board the *Niagara* two or three days. She appeared to be very well manned; they chiefly manned the prizes from her."

Capt. Barclay asks:

"Was I obliged to take from the *Queen Charlotte* stores of various descriptions, even to sails, cables and anchors, as well as a proportion of pistols to fire the guns off with before I could make the *Detroit* at all fit for the lake?"

Lt. Stokoe—"Yes, you were."

Verdict: Full and honorable acquittal. The court finds:

"That the capture of his Majesty's late squadron was caused by the very defective means Captain Barclay possessed to equip them on Lake Erie;

"The want of a sufficient number of able seamen, whom he had repeatedly and earnestly requested of Sir James Yeo to be sent to him;

"The very great superiority of the enemy to the British squadron;

"And the unfortunate early fall of the superior officers in the action.

"That it appeared that the greatest exertions had been made by Captain Barclay in equipping and getting into order the vessels under his command;

"That he was fully justified, under the existing circumstances, in bringing the enemy to action;

"That the judgment and gallantry of Captain Barclay in taking his squadron into action, and during the contest, were highly conspicuous and entitled him to the highest praise;

"And that the whole of the other officers and men of his Majesty's late squadron conducted themselves in the most gallant manner;

"And doth adjudge the said Captain Robert Heriot Barclay, his surviving officers and men to be most fully and honorably acquitted."



THE *DETROIT*, BARCLAY'S FLAGSHIP IN THE BATTLE OF PUT-IN-BAY.

From a drawing in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Paintings, Toronto Public Library.

II.

THE initiative on Lake Erie had passed to the Americans. Capt. Barclay, with the British squadron of five heterogeneous vessels, was cooped up in Malden, on the Detroit river, near Amherstburg. The *Detroit,* his flagship, was rushed together from green timber to break the blockade.

The *Detroit* was fitted out with field guns and rampart guns and siege guns, and anything that would make a noise. Of her nineteen pieces of artillery only two were ship's guns, and these were not mates. She had six different calibres of cannon, none of which would go off without being shot at by pistols.

The other vessels of the squadron were smaller and even worse equipped. One, the *Chippawa* schooner, was a mere smack, measuring by the most generous computation only seventy tons, with a "broadside" of nine pounds. She had a crew of thirteen, but sailors were so scarce eight of her thirteen men were soldiers. Another vessel, the *Governor Hunter,* was a brig of eighty tons, so tiny that some of her guns threw two-pound balls and some four. She was exceeded in size by a one-masted sloop, the *Little Belt.* The *Lady Prevost,* known as a "schooner-brig" from her two square topsails, and named to please the man who was the millstone around the neck of every naval commander, was somewhat larger; but the only vessel in the squadron capable of supporting the *Detroit* or facing the enemy was the 18-gun ship *Queen Charlotte,* of four hundred tons.

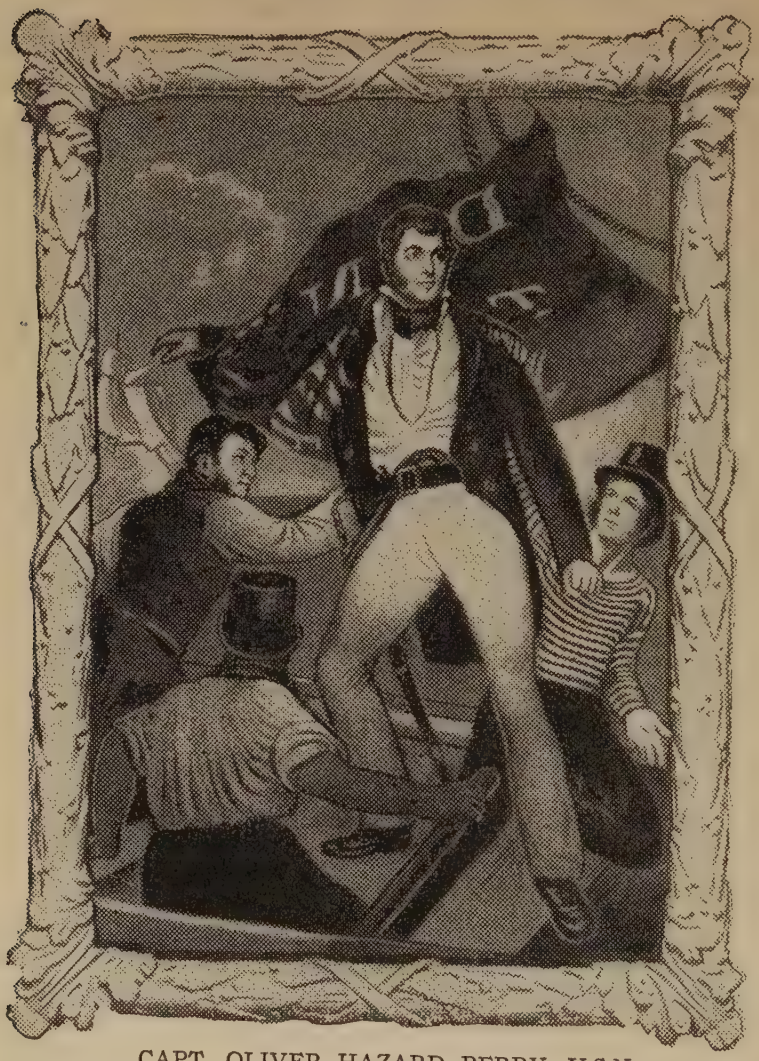
Barclay held out to the last biscuit, hoping for men and guns. When the ships went out to fight, the guns

meant for her had not got farther west then Burlington Heights. Only fifty bluejackets had filtered through the forests from Quebec. Five hundred were needed. The deficiency was made up in part by the use of eighty Canadian boatmen, who knew nothing of sea-gunnery and little of square-riggers; two hundred and forty soldiers from the garrison, who knew less; and a few Indians, who could shoot and climb; a total of four hundred and seven men. So manned, the starveling fleet, which could, when every gun worked, throw a broadside of 459 pounds, sallied forth on the tenth of September, 1813, to fight for bread with a fleet whose combined broadsides totalled 936 pounds.

The blockaders lay at Put-In Bay, in the Bass Islands, in the west end of Lake Erie, thirty miles from Malden. Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry was in command, and his total force numbered 532 men. Of these 329 were seamen. When the six British sails were sighted to the westward, one of the American schooners was absent on a mission. The remaining nine vessels—a small brig, five schooners, a sloop and two large brigs, each more powerful than the *Detroit* or *Queen Charlotte*—got under way at once.

The southwest wind shifted to the southeast, robbing Capt. Barclay of the only advantage he possessed —the weather-gauge. He hove to on the port tack. And so, with empty stomachs but high hearts and colors nailed to the mastheads, the undaunted British sanded their decks for battle and waited the coming of the full-fed foe.

The fight was long and hard. Handicapped as



CAPT. OLIVER HAZARD PERRY, U.S.N.

From an old portrait representing him in the act of crossing from his shattered flagship *Lawrence* to the *Niagara,* with his fighting flag about him. Portrait and setting are artificial, but their theatrical character is not out of keeping with their subject, and the details of costume, even to the striped jersey, side whiskers and stiff hat on the seaman, and the master-commandant's frilled shirt and stock, are historically correct. Perry, however, actually wore much simpler clothing during the battle. His blue fighting jacket, like the smock of a workman's overalls, only shorter in the body, is still preserved in the Rhode Island Historical Society's collection.

they were, the British pounded Perry's flagship to a pulp; pounded her so hard that her sails hung in bundles of rags from her splintered masts and she could neither go nor come; pounded her till her decks so swam with blood that the wounded in the surgeon's room below were wet with it as it seeped through the planking; pounded her till but one gun could speak in her broadside of ten, and of her crew of 142 men 22 had been killed and 89 wounded; pounded her till her captain left her and her flags came down.

The flight of Perry from his flagship was one of the many incidents of the battle. The brig was named the *Lawrence,* after the captain of the *Chesapeake.* She bore at her fore-truck a blue flag with letters of white in it spelling out Lawrence's dying words: "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP." Wrapping this flag and his broad-pennant around him, Capt. Perry stepped into his gig and was rowed, with his young brother, through the battle smoke and cannon balls, to the *Lawrence's* sister brig, the *Niagara.* The latter had kept out of the conflict, her commander, Lieut. Jesse D. Elliott, sticking to the letter of his instructions regarding stations, although he could see his chief was in grave peril. Capt. Perry bundled him out of his brig immediately on boarding her, sending him in a boat to bring up the other laggards.

Elliott's punctiliousness proved his chief's salvation. Hoisting his blue battle flag again in his new command, Perry sheeted the *Niagara's* top-gallant-sails home and swung her right through the heart of the British squadron.

Three hours' bombardment by the *Lawrence* and van schooners at close range and by the *Niagara* and



THE *NIAGARA*, PERRY'S SECOND FLAGSHIP,

In which he won the battle of Put-in-Bay. From a pen and ink drawing of the original ship in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, in the Toronto Public Library.

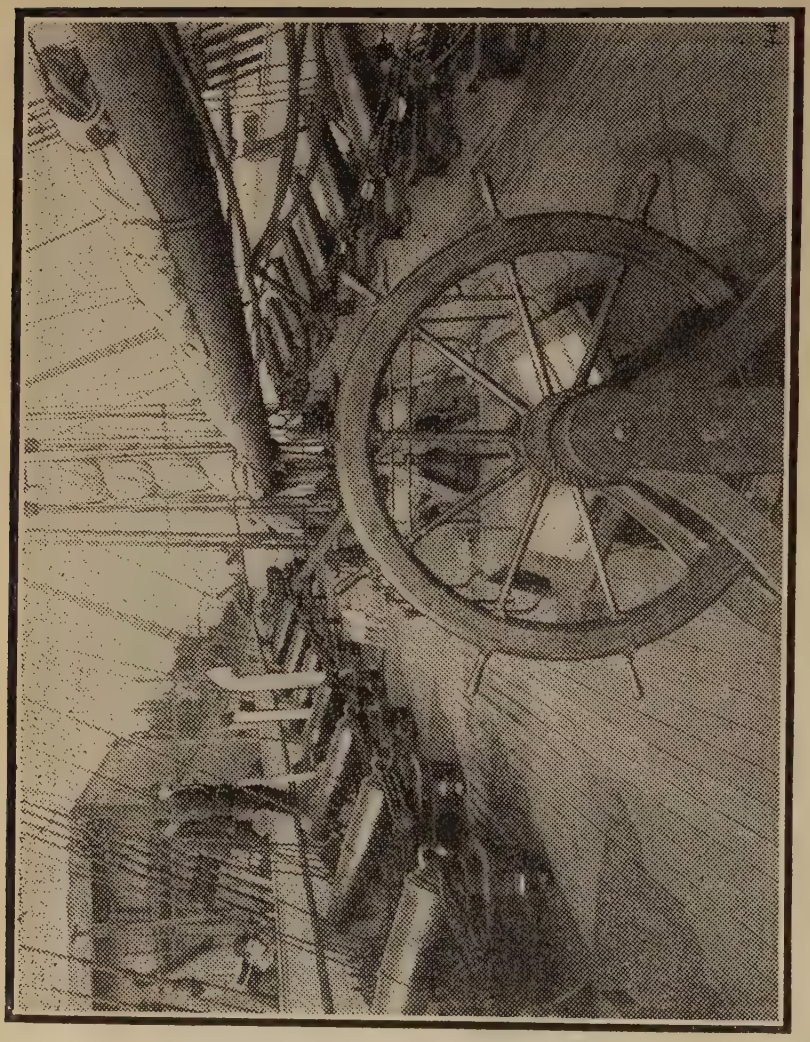
other vessels at long range had beaten in the port bulwarks of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte,* dismounted their guns and slaughtered their men.

Capt. Robert A. Finnis, of the *Queen Charlotte,* had been killed at the first broadside. Stokoe, her first lieutenant, was wounded. Command of the ship devolved upon Lieut. Robert Irvine, gallant Canadian graduate of the despised Provincial Marine.

The *Detroit,* as heavily hammered as her consort, had had her first lieutenant, John Garland, killed. Capt. Barclay, who had lost his left arm at Moir Montier roads years before this day, had his right arm mangled and received seven other wounds. He had to be carried below at the moment Perry made his passage, and the deck was left to Lieut. George Inglis. The only other British vessel of any fighting power was the *Lady Prevost.* Her commander, Lieut. Edward Buchan, had been dangerously wounded, and another Canadian from the Provincial Marine, Lieut. Charles Frederic Rolette, took charge. He, too, was wounded. The schooner had fought till her rudder was shot away, when she, like the *Lawrence,* drifted out of the battle line.

The survivors strove to turn the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* around, so as to bring their starboard batteries into play. The ships had not, at the beginning of the battle, enough sailors to manoeuvre them safely in small compass; and now, with sheets and braces shot away, spars crashing down and the wheel-ropes cluttered with dead, they fell foul of one another as they turned.

The unscathed *Niagara* hurled three-hundredweight of shot from one broadside at the entangled



THE *NIAGARA'S* MAIN DECK

From the wheel forward, showing the 32-pounder carronades, which lined her sides. From a photograph of the raised and restored vessel taken in 1913.

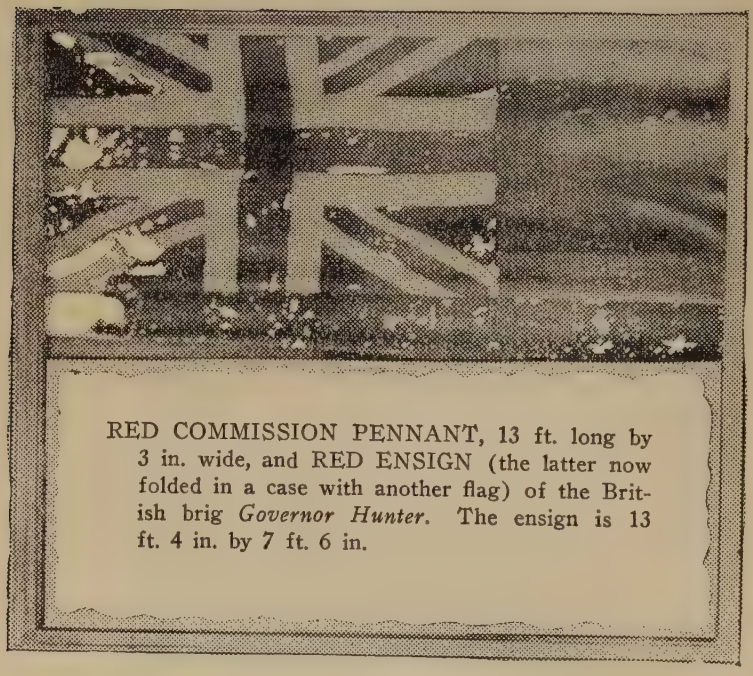
ships and the eighty-ton brig *Hunter*. The other three-hundredweight she hove into the *Little Belt* and *Chippawa* and disabled *Lady Prevost*. It was not a fresh combat she inaugurated, but a slaughter. The British flags were spiked to the spars and could not be lowered. The *Detroit's* ensign fell when a shot took away the mizzen-gaff from which it was flown. She could neither fight nor move. Forty-one British were dead and ninety-four wounded. Twenty-seven Americans had been killed and ninety-six wounded. Over the splintered bulwarks of the *Queen Charlotte* a boarding-pike was thrust, waving a white tablecloth, soiled with blood. This was accepted as a flag of truce. "Do you strike?" the *Niagara* hailed the *Detroit*. "We do," was the answer from the acting commander. The American trumpets sang "Cease fire," and Perry wrote his famous despatch:

"We have met the enemy and they are ours;
two ships, two brigs, a schooner and a sloop."

The battle meant more than a local naval victory. Through the loss of those six ill-found, ill-manned, ill-gunned ships, we lost control of water transport west of Niagara. Water transport was the only transport by which war supplies could be forwarded. The British offensive, which was the best defence against American attack, was snipped as with scissors.

Within a few weeks General Procter was retreating up the Thames, burning his stores and gunboats as the water shoaled. At Moraviantown was fought the disastrous battle which shook our hold on the west. The white-plumed Tecumseh, the noblest red man of them all, there died bravely, fighting shoulder to shoulder with his British allies. His dead body was

abused by Kentucky riflemen. His spirit survives, an inspiration to the brave and good of both races; but with his death went the last possibility of the Indian ever sharing the North American continent with the white nations on equal terms.

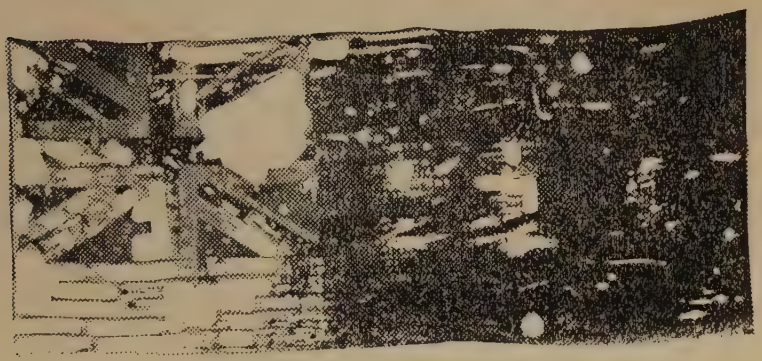


RED COMMISSION PENNANT, 13 ft. long by 3 in. wide, and RED ENSIGN (the latter now folded in a case with another flag) of the British brig *Governor Hunter*. The ensign is 13 ft. 4 in. by 7 ft. 6 in.

Brock's brilliant dash upon Detroit, Procter's menace of the American middle west by his expedition against Fort Meigs, were reduced to nought. The American invader poured into the yet unnamed Province of Ontario. Burlington Heights became, for the time, the western frontier. At a price of blood

and tears British North America was eventually delivered from the invasion of the United States. But if ever the importance of the navy as the first line of defence was emphasized, it was in the chain of disasters and sacrifices forged through failure to support the poor little Lake Erie squadron of six ships.

God help Canada if the red bunting of the British Navy ever again runs out, or the White Ensign has to be shortened!



RED ENSIGN 26 ft. 4 in. by 6 ft., of Capt. Barclay's flagship *Detroit*.

III.

AMERICAN victors made a "mainsail haul" of trophy flags when they took our backwoods-built squadron at this Battle of Put-In Bay.

The six ships lost yielded thirteen flags. The flags themselves, preserved as trophies at Annapolis, where they teach young America the art of war at sea, emphasize the "surroundings of extreme difficulty" in which Capt. Barclay labored.

Here is his own ensign, from the *Detroit*. Eighteen narrow strips of red bunting were needed to make it.

Nothing is left, in some places, but the seams where the edges of the nine-inch strips were laboriously joined to form the twenty-six-foot flag. That appears to have been all the red bunting the flagmaker had; the pennant, or streamer, accompanying this flag which should be a red band of thirty or forty feet in length, is a short strip of blue, with a tiny red cross on a white patch. The Union Jack part of the red ensign appears to have been cut down from a larger one. Even so, it is too large for its "canton," or quarter, one way, and too small the other.

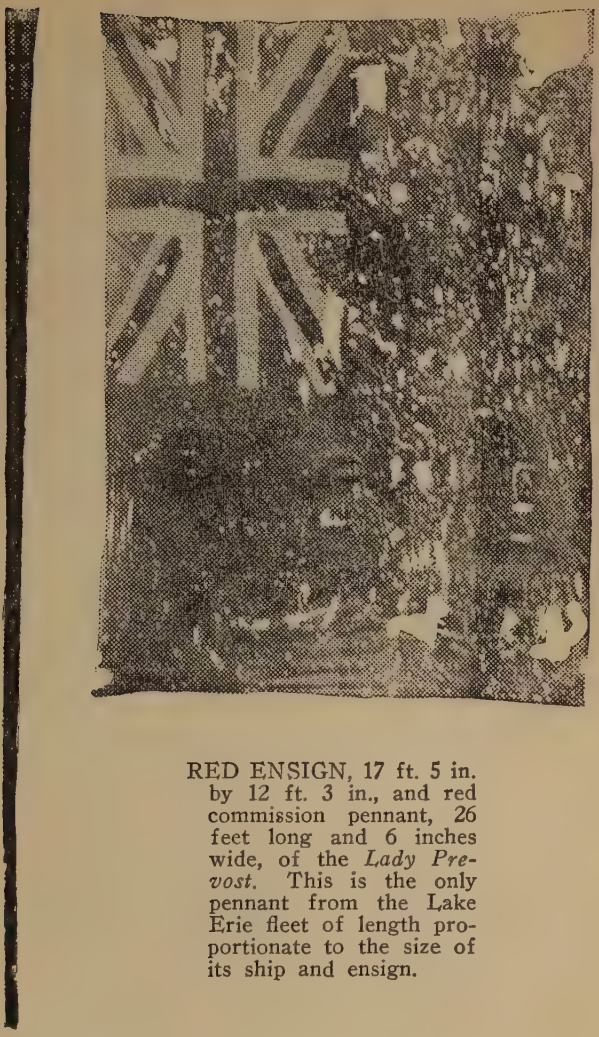
Clean-cut round holes show in this flag, in addition to rents and tears. A big piece is missing from one corner. These are not the ravages of moths and years. They are cannonball marks.

Every flag of the thirteen offers mute support of the gallant Barclay's evidence of meagre equipment. Only two are alike. The flagship flew the Red Ensign, but her consort, the *Queen Charlotte,* flew the White. The jack in it is lopsided, as if cut down, and its red St. George's Cross is pitiably thin. Her commission pennant is blue. Both it and the red commission pennants of the *Queen Charlotte* and of the little *Hunter,* are only half-length; the red bunting had given out. The *Lady Prevost* had a long red pennant, perhaps a survivor from earlier days. She had a red ensign, and it is so short that it seems almost square. The jack in it is out of proportion. The ensign is much decayed in the lower part, and the ragged condition of the hoist, the part of the flag next the mast, quite suggests it having been nailed aloft.

The *Hunter* had a red ensign, but the *Little Belt's* was of blue. So was the *Chippawa's.* The jacks in



ENSIGN OF THE *LADY PREVOST* CAPTURED AT PUT-IN BAY



RED ENSIGN, 17 ft. 5 in. by 12 ft. 3 in., and red commission pennant, 26 feet long and 6 inches wide, of the *Lady Prevost*. This is the only pennant from the Lake Erie fleet of length proportionate to the size of its ship and ensign.

these ensigns are so large, and the white parts of the crosses so thick, that they seem to have been cut down from other flags. In the case of the *Little Belt,* the jack occupies almost all of one end of the flag. This might have been due to a part having been torn off or decayed utterly; but the work of flag restoration conducted by Mrs. Amelia Fowler and her forty needle-women for the United States Congress was so painstaking and so accurate that it is not probable that there was any more of the flag than now appears. In the case of the missing opposite quarters of the *De-*

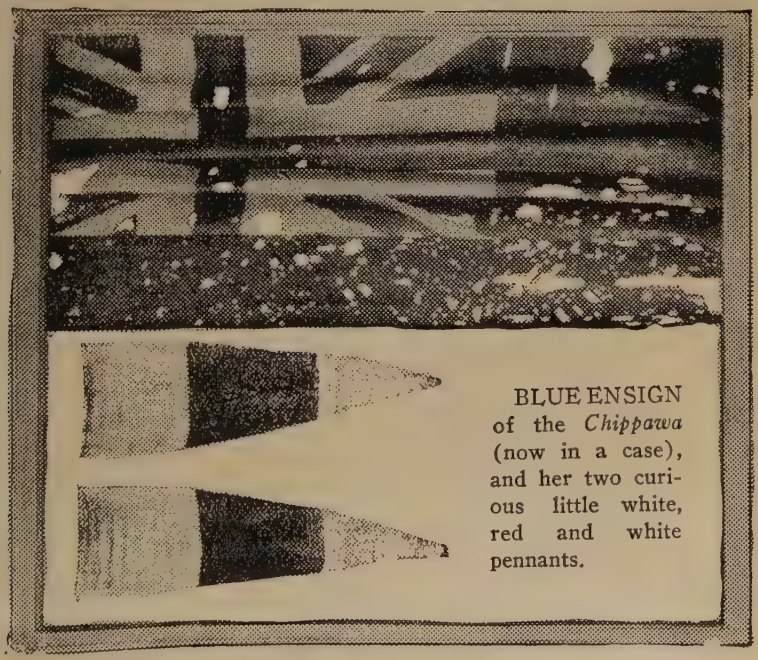


THE *LITTLE BELT'S* RAGGED BLUE ENSIGN, 14 ft. 6 in. long by 7 ft. 3 in. wide, with the Union Jack in it out of all proportion.

troit's jack, for example, they have been indicated by the needlewomen by a network of stitches of the proper colors, fastened on to the linen background to which the surviving parts are sewn. This has been the process in restoring and preserving all these flags.

Little Belt was a favorite name in the navy of 1812, commemorating the exploits of our fleet against the Danes, in the Baltic water of that name. It was popularized by the gallant resistance of H.M.S. *Little*

Belt, a 20-gun corvette, when attacked by the U.S.S. *President,* of 54 guns, in a twilight panic off Cape Henry in 1811, when the two nations were at peace. The *Little Belt* fought for forty-five minutes before her gigantic opponent realized her mistake or had enough of it; but although the American Commodore Rodgers sent his apologies and offers of assistance, Capt. A. B. Bingham, of the shattered British ship,



BLUE ENSIGN of the *Chippawa* (now in a case), and her two curious little white, red and white pennants.

proudly declined to accept help, and brought his vessel into Halifax unaided.

The *Little Belt* of Lake Erie, with her two guns, twelve seamen and ten soldiers, was called after this gallant corvette.

The two flags of the thirteen which are mates are a pair of pennants from the *Chippawa,* the like of

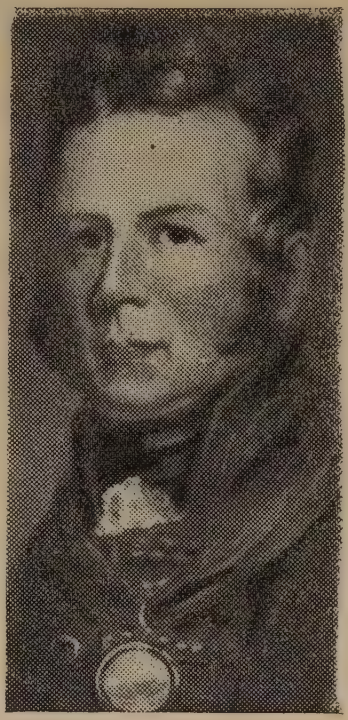
which does not occur elsewhere among trophy flags. The commission pennants of the navy in 1813 were similar to the commission pennants of to-day; narrow strips of bunting, a red St. George's Cross on a white ground, with a long tail. In the old navy the tail might be red, white or blue, or all three colors. These pennants of the *Chippawa* resemble nothing more than the burgees of a yacht, or the "highs" or windfinders of a Grand Banks fisherman. They are triangular flags, slightly more than four feet long, and about eighteen inches wide, tapering to two inches. They have three perpendicular bars of white, red, and white. It would be interesting to know whether they were so made because of the shortage of bunting in the backwoods, or whether they are surviving insignia of the long-extinct Provincial Marine, to which the little *Chippawa* with her one nine-pounder gun, belonged.

Each thread of the *Detroit's* dim red flag, and of the twelve flags which hang with it in honorable captivity, is redolent of border romance, of forest life, of camp-fires, trails and ambushes. The dusty bunting holds the aroma of unending pine woods, and the sharp fragrance of smoke-tanned skins mingled with the pungency of burnt gunpowder.

Brock's gallant Canadian militia men, decked out in the cast-off uniforms of regulars to drive the panic-stricken Hull into the surrender of the fort which gave the *Detroit* her name; redskins by the thousands roaming about the shipyard, slaughtering for powder-horns the bullocks meant to feed the crews; guns, sails, cables, cordage and stores, every item of equipment from the sail-needle that stitched the flags to the six-

thousand-pound anchor, and the sailors who plied the one and cat-headed the other, having to come seven hundred miles through the wilderness — by batteau, canoe or ox-drag—from Quebec, and to Quebec from England; Sir George Prevost's empty promises of men and stores; and his goading taunt: "Yeo's experience should convince Barclay that he has only to dare and he will be successful"—these are some of the threads of the thirteen flags of the *Detroit's* story.

There are still others—of the young commander's gallantry towards the widow of an officer killed at York, and the resultant escape of the American squadron he was blockading and their blockade of him in turn; and of the great bear he kept in a cage on board, which broke loose in the battle and mauled and maimed the wounded till he was killed; and of the Indian chief who, stationed aloft as a sharpshooter, was so terri-



SIR GEORGE PREVOST, BART., GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF AND COMMANDER OF THE FORCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

From a painting by Berthon, reproduced in water color, in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, Toronto Public Library. It was the taunt of Sir George Prevost which drove Capt. Barclay into battle on Lake Erie, and Sir George Prevost's failure to supply him with guns, men and equipment which caused him to lose the battle.

fied by the ear-splitting crash of the first broadside that he fled to the hold, and was drenched in his flight with the blood and brains of a mangled gunner.

However apocryphal some of the stories attached to the *Detroit,* there is sufficient adventure associated with her fragmentary flag to make one yearn for the ability to do justice to its history.

XXI.

The Trail of the Poisoned Pen

CLINK! CLINK! CLINK! rang the apple-wood mallets on the caulking irons. Oakum was being pounded into the empty seams of H.M.S. *Confiance,* while she slowly moved between the hostile shores of Lake Champlain on the morning of Sept. 11, 1814. Shavings flew from carpenters' planes, ring of saw and tap of hammer drowned the crunch of the foam under the bows. The ship was afloat and under sail, her White Ensign faintly fluttering in the breeze, her commander's broad pennant pointing the way for the fleet which followed her; but riggers were yet busy among the caulkers and carpenters; and amid the family of boats and barges that clung to her sides and bumped the painters' stages as she sailed, blazed the red flag of a powder-batteau. Joiners were even now putting the finishing touches on the magazine in the hold to which the ammunition had yet to be transferred.

Aft, on the short poop deck, Commander George Downie, R.N., strode back and forth, a brass telescope under one arm, his fingers opening and closing on it with force which seemed enough to crush the barrel. No bulwarks barred his view of the water on either side. Nothing but a ridge-rope intervened.

The ship had been launched only sixteen days before. The busy scene in progress on her decks and alongside might well become a frigate lying in a dock-

yard; but this ship was not only under sail but sailing into battle, with the shore gangs still at work on all the details of her, from belaying pins for her new-rove gear to wedges to give the elevation to her maiden cannon; and there had been no time to build the bulwarks which might have made her upper-deck batteries workable.

Thirty-nine guns the *Confiance* was credited with and she had a furnace for heating their shot. Two of the guns were still among the stone ballast that had been dumped into the hold to keep her upright. Seven others, on poop and forecastle, might as well have been mounted on rooftops, for there were no fighting stations for their men, nor chocks and timber-heads to hold them in place.

The *Confiance's* crew was as ill-sorted and unready as the ship herself. There were 270 men on her muster roll. Eighty-six were marines, artillerymen and soldiers. Of the remaining hundred and eighty-four, one hundred and eighteen were "volunteers." Ten ships of war lying at Quebec had been combed for these worthies. Some of them had been liberated from irons for the very purpose of manning the *Confiance*. Others were good men enough, but had no man-of-war training, having been lent by Quebec transports. Still others were also good but, being French-Canadians, could not understand a word of the English orders. The whole crowd had been bundled aboard the *Confiance* forty-eight hours before. Capt. Downie himself was new to them and to the ship. Only the preceding week he had been pitchforked from a lieutenancy aboard H.M.S. *Montreal,* on Lake Ontario, into command of this new frigate.

Her original captain had lasted just five days. "Small wonder," thought Capt. Downie bitterly, as he watched the artificers vainly trying to band carronade-locks on to the long-guns of the maindeck with copper hoops. The frigate's proper gun-locks were still aboard H.M.S. *Junon,* on their way to Quebec.

Behind the *Confiance* sailed the 16-gun brig *Linnet,* commanded by Capt. Daniel Pring; and after her came the small single-stickers *Finch* and *Chub,* armed with nine and ten guns. They had been American sloops, and were captured in a well-fought soldiers' fight the year before. They rated as British cutters. A dozen gunboats—open barges, with cannons mounted on bow or stern, heavy as lead and awkward as steamrollers—toiled along in the rear, rowed by perspiring crews who knew they would have no protection from bullets and cannonballs save the oars they held.

It was not Capt. Downie's fault that his vessel was in this state of unpreparedness, nor was it by his will that she was on her way to battle. He had been nagged, goaded and taunted into a rash action. The squadron and the army were co-operating to carry the war into America. Sir George Prevost, captain-general and commander-in-chief in Canada, had undertaken the invasion of New York, and ordered the fleet to support his army in an attack on Plattsburg on the west side of Lake Champlain.

The long lake, lying between Vermont and New York states, ran deep into American territory. Only five per cent. of its area, at the northern end, was within the borders of Canada, immediately south of Montreal. It was at Isle aux Noix, in this northern

portion, that the British had their station and rushed together their flotilla, building their ships from the green trees of the forest. Capt. Downie's remonstrances over sending the squadron to fight before it was fit had been met with reflections on his courage; so the moment the wind came fair he took his life and his honor in his hands and hoisted the signal to steer for Plattsburg.

As the last of the powder-kegs disappeared into the hold Capt. Downie ordered the shore-gangs to pack their tools, and leave the ship in their boats, which trailed along with her. Then he hove to and gave instructions to the squadron as to the plan of attack. They would find the enemy at anchor across the harbor mouth. To each vessel, with her supporting gunboats, he allotted an enemy ship as a target. His own inferior crew evidenced no great cheerfulness when they learned the magnitude of their task; so the first lieutenant, Mr. John Robertson—the only man on board whom Capt. Downie knew—patiently explained to them that Sir George Prevost had agreed that as soon as the signal was given he would attack the shore positions of the enemy with the army, so that the American fleet would be placed between two fires and driven to fight a fleet battle under sail or surrender at anchor.

The squadron filed away and stood on for Plattsburg before the light northeast wind. At ten minutes to eight the *Confiance* was abreast of Cumberland Head, a peninsula which forms the northeastern protection of the harbor. The appointed signal was given; her guns were "scaled," that is, fired with blank cartridges, as she stood on.

Eagerly everyone listened, as the echoes died away along the shore, for the answering roll of British drums or the crash of field guns opening the attack on the American entrenchments. But all that came across the still water was the faint, faint chirrup of bugles calling:

> Come to the cookhouse door, boys,
> Come to cookhouse door.

Sir George Prevost, true to his character of peevish meddlesome bungler, gave orders to cook breakfast, when he should have given orders to charge.

Capt. Downie and his squadron had now "opened" Plattsburg bay amid salvos from the American gunboats and vessels anchored close to Cumberland Head. The British had crossed the Rubicon.

There was no turning back against the wind which had brought them. The *Confiance,* drawing only eight and a half feet of water, was a poor ship to take to windward in any circumstances. An unperturbed commander, with Capt. Downie's fifty-six long guns in his squadron, might have stood off and on, damaging the anchored enemy at long range, until the army ashore made its attack, or until he forced the enemy to come out in the open and fight. But such deliberation could not be expected from a commander in whose ears rang a taunt like this:

> "The troops have been held in readiness since six o'clock this morning to storm the enemy's works at nearly the same moment as the naval action begins in the bay. I ascribe the disappointment I have experienced to the unfortunate change of wind, and shall rejoice

to learn that my reasonable expectations have been frustrated by NO OTHER CAUSE."

This was the word Capt. Downie had received from Sir George Prevost the day before. Stung to



SIR GEORGE PREVOST

Who caused our defeat on Lake Champlain by urging Capt. Downie into battle when unable to fight and failing to co-operate with him. The picture is from a xylograph caricature in color, published by Dighton, Spring Gardens, November, 1812, and preserved in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, Toronto Public Library.

the quick by it, as Capt. Barclay had been stung by the sneer, "Yeo's experience should convince Barclay that he has only to dare to be successful," Downie went to his death on Sept. 11, 1814, as Barclay went to his defeat a year and a day previously.

The American squadron stretched across the bay mouth in line ahead; anchored, stern and bow, with springs on each anchor, for turning purposes. The line was skilfully drawn so that reefs protected its rear from the approach of heavier vessels than gunboats, and the head of the line could not be crumpled up by mass attack because it lay to windward of vessels passing Cumberland Head. At the head of the line was their brig *Eagle* of 20 guns and 160 men. She was flanked by two gunboats. In the centre was their flagship, the *Saratoga,* of 26 guns and 300 men. She had three gunboats beside her. Astern of her lay the schooner *Ticonderoga,* which had been a steamer, but whose engines were of the experimental order. She had 17 guns and 130 men. Further along was the sloop *Commodore Preble,* of seven guns and 45 men. She was flanked by six more gunboats. The American gunboats mounted sixteen guns among them, and their crews totalled 346.

Aboard the American flagship Master Commandant Thomas Macdonough, the youthful commander, upon whom hung the fate of the day, reverently knelt with his crew and prayed for victory. It was a solemn occasion; for not only were a thousand men going down into the valley of the shadow, but the fate of the nation was in the balance. Washington had just been captured, the sea coast was blockaded, the District of Maine had been seized, and the invasion of New York state was in progress.

The American commander's prayer was punctuated by the shrill crowing of a fighting cock. A spent sixteen-pounder ball from the *Linnet* came aboard, knocking over a hencoop in the waist; and a game-



CAPT. THOMAS MACDONOUGH

The victor of Lake Champlain, from the Gilbert Stuart painting in the Century Club, New York.

cock, escaping from the wreck, leapt on the bulwarks, flapped his wings, and crowed a lusty defiance. The crew took this as a good omen; and Macdonough rose from prayer to sight a gun. It seemed a terrible se-

quence of deeds; but who shall say that what Macdonough did in either case was wrong? The twenty-four-pounder he levelled and fired struck the *Confiance* as she came bow-on. The raking shot entered the hawse-pipe, cut away an anchor cable and anchor, and ploughed the length of the maindeck, killing and mangling twenty men. Yet it was a patriot's blow, struck in fair fight; and no Briton will condemn it.

Galled by the gunboats, raked by the *Eagle* and *Saratoga,* bruised, beaten and battered by guns of every calibre, from 42-pounders down, the *Confiance* came grandly on. Guns and gun crews were swept from her wide-open quarter-deck and top-gallant forecastle. Two anchors were shot from her bows. The cast-offs of a dozen ships who comprised the *Confiance's* crew purged themselves of all their past by the way they stood that ten minutes of purgatory, without answering and without flinching.

It was Capt. Downie's plan to steer straight across the bows of the *Saratoga,* so as to rake her with one broadside while he sank the *Eagle* with the other. His tactics were rather those of the maddened bull than of the calculating matador. Every one of his intentions were frustrated. The light wind veered so that he was set down abreast of the *Saratoga,* instead of across her; and the loss of two anchors compelled him to let go his third before it too should be shot away, although he was yet 400 yards from his objective. Still holding his ragged crew in hand, Capt. Downie brought his ship to the wind, anchored with springs on his cable, and, sighting his maindeck guns personally, delivered a broadside which staggered the *Saratoga* like a tidal wave. She was a smaller ship than the *Confiance,* but

as heavily armed for close-range fighting. Fifty men of her crew went down before that blast. Her spanker boom was cut in two above Macdonough's head, and the windage of the ball knocked him over; but he sprang to his feet shouting, "Steady, lads! Load quick and fire low!"—almost the identical words George Downie was using a quarter of a mile away across the smoke-laden water.

The battle began at 8 a.m., with the fire of the American gunboats on the *Confiance* as she rounded Cumberland Head. At 8.10 the *Confiance* anchored and fired her tremendous broadside. A few minutes later, as Capt. Downie was sighting one of the 24-pounders, a shot from the *Saratoga* struck the gun and hurled it off its carriage, crushing him fatally. The blow was terrific, yet it did not break the skin, only discoloring a patch upon his body the size of a small plate. His gold watch was flattened, the long hand pointing to the figure III., the short hand being just past the figure VIII. The captain gasped and died without a word.

To the eternal credit of her ragtag-and-bobtail crew the *Confiance* fought on. Capt. Downie's line-of-battle had failed completely. The brig *Linnet* came near to her allotted station, battered the *Eagle*—of double her size—out of her place, and forced her to make sail and run down under the *Saratoga's* quarter, where she anchored by the stern. But the sloop *Chub* had anchored in the wrong spot, and, losing her cable, mainboom and bowsprit, drifted through the American lines and surrendered. The *Finch,* too, got aground and was out of the battle from the beginning. The gunboats failed. Three or four,

including the *Murray,* commanded by Lieut. Christopher James Bell, and the *Beresford,* commanded by Lieut. James Robertson, fought nobly. They forced the American sloop *Preble* to cut her cable and run, and almost succeeded in turning the rear of the American line. But the *Ticonderoga* stopped them. Some of the other British gunboats ran away, either through a mistake in signals or lack of pluck. It takes courage of a high order to row open boats against bulwarked vessels belching cannon-balls. Had more of the gunboat crews and commanders possessed that courage the day on Lake Champlain might have ended differently.

For two hours after Capt. Downie's death the *Confiance* kept his White Ensign flying. One side of her was beaten in by the combined fire of the American fleet. Her guns had been double-shotted and treble-shotted. Some burst. Others recoiled and capsized. Still others were loaded with double charges of shot and no powder, or with the wads below the cartridges, by their disorganized or inexperienced crews; and, as on Lake Erie, the only way in which many of the guns could be discharged was by firing pistols at the touch-holes.

Lieut. John Robertson, commanding since Capt. Downie's death, tried to wind the ship, that is, turn her around. There was scarcely any breeze left, all the sails were in ribbons, the gear was junk. He hailed the gunboats to tow her around, but they would not venture into the maelstrom of cannon-shot where she writhed. Then he tried to fasten a spring on her cable and heave her stern around with that.

The *Saratoga,* quite as badly battered, had by this

time only twenty of her hundreds of hammocks unpierced; showing that much of the British shot was flying over her, just above the heads of her crew. The hammocks were stowed in nettings above the bulwarks. Still, her starboard side, corresponding to the *Confiance's* port side, had been beaten in, and every one of the thirteen guns on it disabled. Macdonough himself fired the last one, and the naval-bolt broke with the recoil.

The American commander had been able to place several anchors out before the action, and by hauling on one of these he succeeded in turning his ship completely around and bringing his uninjured port batteries into play, while the *Confiance* still hung helplessly on her cable.

The British ship could no longer be fought. Her men could not be kept to their quarters. They had very little in the way of quarters left. Their vessel, with one hundred and five cannon-balls in her hull, was so shot through and through that she was only kept afloat by running in the port guns and heeling her to starboard. Of course these run-in guns were useless. Sixty wounded were drowning in the hold below the gun deck. They had to be moved continuously as the water rose, and round shot ploughed through the surgeon's rooms. And forty-one dead lay about her decks. They included her captain and her second lieutenant; and a woman—the steward's wife, killed while bravely binding up the hurts of the wounded with strips from the folds of her skirt.

At 10.30 Lieut. Robertson hauled down the *Confiance's* flag.

For fifteen minutes longer Capt. Daniel Pring,

with the survivors of his eighty men and boys, kept up the fight in the little brig *Linnet.* But she was doomed. She had only been holding on in hope of the *Confiance* being able to get her starboard batteries into action. For ten minutes she stood the combined fire of the American fleet; then, with the water swirling a foot above the lower deck, she fired a lee-gun and her big Blue Ensign fluttered down from the gaff-end, as the *Chub's* red ensign and *Confiance's* white one had done.

Thomas Macdonough's prayer was answered. His country had been granted salvation from the enemy. The eleven thousand Peninsular veterans who had waited since daylight for the signal to advance were ordered forward—halted—and given the right-about-face by the vacillating captain-general and commander-in-chief of the British forces in Canada, Lieut.-Gen. Sir George Prevost, Bart. When next morning dawned they were far on their retreat northwards.

THE *CONFIANCE'S* FLAG

A white ensign 23 ft. 8 in. long by 13 ft. wide, probably flown for the first time Sept. 11, 1814, when the new ship was captured by the enemy. It is now in the collection of American naval trophies at Annapolis.

XXII.

Patriots, Poltroons and Profiteers

"EMBLEMS of disaster, but never once of disgrace; of defeat, but not in one instance of dishonor."

If there is any captured British bunting from the war of 1812 which makes the British heart ponder ere re-affirming this faith, it is the tattered white, blue and red ensigns captured with Capt. Downie's squadron on Lake Champlain on September 11, 1814.

It was sheer murder to send Capt. Downie on his mission. It is that fact and not the manner in which the flags were defended, nor the minor detail of the conduct of an individual gunboat captain, which gives us pause.

Death snatched Sir George Prevost from disgrace by the court-martial called for by his victim's indignant colleague and superior, Sir James Lucas Yeo; but it is a satire upon the honours of the Empire that Westminster Abbey's marble should enshrine the fame of this man, whose pettish pen pinned up sixteen British sea flags on the walls of the Annapolis Naval Academy—thirteen from Lake Erie, three from Lake Champlain—almost half of the whole collection in captivity.

It was not unnatural that Sir James Lucas Yeo, commander-in-chief for the Royal Navy on the lakes, should bitterly resent the outcome of the battle of Lake Champlain. Patriotic, professional and per-

sonal motives alike urged him to demand Sir George Prevost's trial.

The *Confiance* had been named for the ship which had made Yeo famous and which he made famous; a French privateer which he "cut out" when a lieutenant, in Muros Bay. He had been promoted to the command of this *Confiance,* and with her captured the town of Cayenne, for which the Prince Regent of Portugal knighted him and presented him with a sword of gold.

It was to commemorate this gallant ship, not in a boastful feeling of confidence, that the Champlain *Confiance* was named. Two other vessels on the lakes were also given this name in compliment to the commander-in-chief—the American schooner *Julia,* when she was captured in 1813, and the American schooner *Scorpion,* when she was taken in 1814.

The charges brought by Sir James Lucas Yeo against Sir George Prevost were:

> "1.—For having, on or about the 11th of September, 1814, by holding out the expectation of a co-operation of the navy under his command, induced Capt. Downie, late of his Majesty's ship *Confiance,* to attack the American squadron on Lake Champlain, when it was highly imprudent to make such attack without the co-operation of the land forces, and for not having afforded that co-operation.
>
> "2.—For not having stormed the American works on shore, at nearly the same time as the said naval action commenced, as he had given Capt. Downie reason to expect.
>
> "3.—For having disregarded the signal for

REMNANTS OF THE *LINNET'S* BLUE ENSIGN

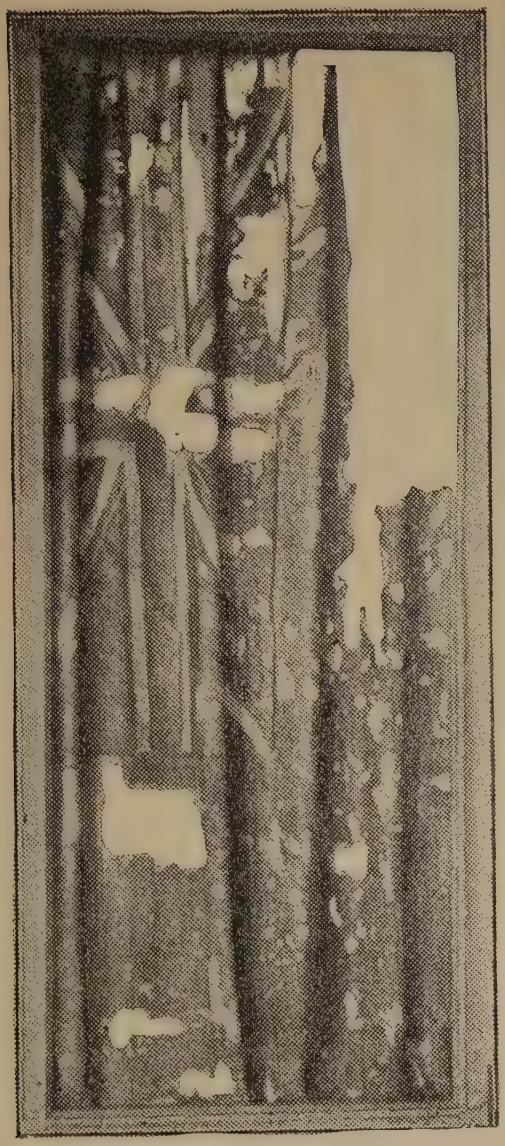
A very tattered flag, hung amid a group of five captured British flags in Mahan Hall, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis. It measures 23 ft. 6 in. by 12 ft.

co-operation which had been previously agreed upon.

"4.—For not having attacked the enemy on shore, either during the said naval action, or after it was ended, whereby his Majesty's naval squadron under the command of Capt. Downie might have been saved."

Next year, when the war was over, on board the grim old *Gladiator* in Portsmouth harbor, Captain Pring, and the surviving officers and crews late belonging to the British Lake Champlain squadron, were tried by court-martial, and most honorably acquitted. The court's sentence stated:— "The court having maturely weighed the evidence, is of opinion, that the capture of H.M.S. *Confiance* and the remainder of the squadron, by the American squadron, was principally caused by the British squadron having been URGED INTO BATTLE PREVIOUS TO ITS BEING IN A PROPER STATE TO MEET THE ENEMY; by the promised co-operation of the land forces not being carried into effect, and by the pressing letters of their commander-in-chief, whereby it appears that he had on the 10th of September, 1814, only waited for the naval attack to storm the enemy's works. That the signal of the approach on the following day was made, by the scaling of the guns, as settled between Captain Downie and Major Coote; and the promised co-operation was communicated to the other officers and crews of the British squadron before the commencement of the action."

The *Finch's* flag was the last to come down in the battle of Lake Champlain, but there was little credit in that; the sloop was the first of the British fleet to



THE *CHUB'S* TATTERED WAR FLAG

A red ensign so decayed that if the remnants were not stitched onto a linen backing with thread of colors corresponding to the originals, they would be unrecognizable. The flag is 18 ft. 6 in. long and 6 ft. 11 in. wide, and is placed in a case in the United States Naval Academy.

get out of action; she was a spectator of the whole fight, had only two men wounded, and surrendered to the hospital patients on Crab Island, who manned a gun and fired on her as she lay helpless on the reef. Yet her commander, Lieut. William Hicks, received from the court-martial the verdict of having "conducted himself with becoming bravery," and Lieut. James McGhie, of the *Chub*—who was himself wounded, and whose vessel fought till she had six men of her crew of forty killed and sixteen wounded, and the sloop had neither bowsprit, main-boom, sails or cable—got a wigging!

Lieut. McGhie was severely reprimanded for not carrying the *Chub* properly into action, although the court confirmed that he had no lack of courage. Possibly the fact that he did not appear at the first court-martial prejudiced his case.

One of the gunboat commanders deserted. He was cashiered. He should have been shot.

The comparison of the forces engaged is given thus, in decidedly partisan fashion, by the naval historian James.

	British.	American.
Vessels	8	14
Broadside guns	38	52
Broadside weights	756 lbs.	1,194 lbs.
Crew	537	950
Tonnage	1,426	2,540

James improperly excludes seven of our ten gunboats because, he says, they did not come near enough to engage; and he excludes the *Finch* because she grounded before the squadron action began. His ex-

clusion of the American sloops *Montgomery* and *President,* which did not take part at all, does not justify such a calculation as he makes; but even admitting that such figures as James' are unfair, the preponderance of force was still with the Americans. Dr. Hannay, a later and less biased writer, gives the American guns as 86 and the British as 87, throwing 1,194 and 1,113 lbs. of metal respectively, as follows:—

American.	British.
86 guns.	87 guns.
14 long 24's	30 long 24's
12 long 18's	5 long 18's
12 long 12's	16 long 12's
7 long 9's	5 long 6's
6 short 42's	14 short 32's
29 short 32's	17 short 18's
6 short 18's	
Total 1,194 lbs.	1,113 lbs.

The losses of the ships engaged were reported thus:

British.	Killed.	Wounded.
Confiance	41	60
Linnet	10	14
Chub	6	16
Finch	—	2

Total, exclusive of gunboats, 57 killed, 92 wounded.

American.	Killed.	Wounded.
Saratoga	28	29
Eagle	13	20
Ticonderoga	6	6
Preble and gunboats	5	3

Total, 52 killed, 58 wounded.

That Sir George Prevost should retreat without giving battle was a "crowning mercy" beyond Commodore Macdonough's hopes. In expectation that in any moment the shore batteries might be captured and turned against his squadron, before taking formal possession of the prizes he removed his own ships out of gunshot of the American batteries. Only then was Lieut. Robertson, of the *Confiance* conveyed on board the *Saratoga* to deliver up his sword. Commodore Macdonough is reported to have addressed him thus:

"You owe it, sir, to the shameful conduct of your gunboats and cutters, that you are performing this office to me; for, had they done their duty, you must have perceived, from the situation of the *Saratoga* that I could hold out no longer; and indeed, nothing induced me to keep up her colors, but, seeing from the united fire of all the rest of my squadron on the *Confiance,* and her unsupported condition, that she must ultimately surrender."

The report of the speech is not much more convincing than Tacitus' "verbatim" of Galgacus at the Battle of the Grampian Mount, where the blue-painted Caledonian shatters the inarticulate record of his race and age with one oration, which could not be surpassed by Cicero in Latin or Demosthenes in Greek.

The two Celts, Galgacus of the first century, and Macdonough of the nineteenth, both spoke; but the words of each would seem to be the words of the historian, not of the hero.

THE flag of the *Finch* appears to have escaped preservation in the American collection of battle trophies. It is not to be found at Annapolis, with the



THE *LINNET'S* BLUE ENSIGN

three other flags from Lake Champlain. Americans should look on the worn ensigns of the *Confiance,* the *Linnet* and the *Chub,* which do appear among the battle trophies of the Naval Academy, with humble gratitude for a great deliverance; for the battle of Lake Champlain was fought at the moment when

> "the Government sat wringing its hands, amid the ruins of its capital and the crash of its resources. * * * There stood between it and disastrous reverse and loss of territory in the north, only the resolution and professional skill of a yet unrecognized seaman on the neglected waters of Lake Champlain."

The words are those of the great American admiral in whose honor Mahan Hall, where these very trophy flags hang, was named.

The valour of the many Britons who stayed and fought the Battle of Lake Champlain amid conditions which made victory impossible and death certain redeems the defect in conduct of the few who ran away; and if disposed to revile the one absconding gunboat commander, or the much more culpable conduct of Sir George Prevost, Americans might con the records of some of their own countrymen in connection with the campaign which the battle culminated.

The state of Vermont, on the east side of Lake Champlain, was sending in money and provisions to the British, while New York, on the west side of Lake Champlain, was being invaded.

"Two-thirds of the army," wrote Sir George Prevost to Lord Bathurst, "are supplied with beef by American contractors, principally of Vermont and New York."

The very spars of the British frigate *Confiance,* when she was being built at Isle-Aux-Noix, to destroy the American fleet, were supplied by American "patriots." One of Commodore Macdonough's officers seized two spars, intended for her foremast and mizzenmast, near the lines, and eight days later intercepted four others, intended for her mainmast and three topmasts. Yet her spars did eventually get through, and were delivered to the British officers by Americans whose sole interest in the war was the money they could make out of it. "Unendurable delay," as Admiral Mahan points out, would have been involved if such spars had come in the only other ways possible, being dragged up the Richelieu rapids or through the tangled wilderness from Quebec.

"The road to St. Regis, New York," wrote the American General Izard, "is covered with droves of (American) cattle, and the river with rafts, destined for the (British) enemy. On the eastern side of Lake Champlain the high roads are insufficient for the cattle pouring into Canada. Like herds of buffaloes they press through the forests, making paths for themselves. Were it not for these supplies the British forces in Canada would soon be suffering from famine."

It is wrong to understate the extent of these forces. It has been glibly said that in the War of 1812 "Four thousand miles of Canadian frontier were held for four years by never more than four thousand troops." That is a loose generality. The War of 1812 did not last four years, the fighting was not on four thousand miles of frontier, and Sir George Prevost's returns show that he, as commander-in-chief, had 29,437 men under his command in the later months of 1814. In

the earlier stages of the war there were only 4,450 British regulars in Canada, and fourteen hundred and fifty of these had to defend, and did defend, the thirteen hundred miles of the Upper Canadian frontier, all through that first hard year.

Describing the operation of the early American beef trust the British commissary at Prescott on the St. Lawrence is quoted in Ridout's "Ten Years in Upper Canada" as writing thus on June 19, 1814: "I have contracted with a Yankee magistrate to furnish this post with fresh beef. A major came with him to make the agreement; but as he was foreman of the Grand Jury of the court in which the Government prosecutes the magistrates for high treason and smuggling, he turned his back and could not see the paper signed."

XXIII.

The Pride of Plymouth

Two were the masts of the *Reindeer* brig,
The Yankee *Wasp* had three;
Three were the odds of her men and guns,
Two were the odds on we.

And when we met off old Land's End,
Now listen all to me,
We fought till the odds were three to one,
Then the captain says, says he:

"We'll try it hand to hand, my boys,
Come, boarders, after me!"
And over the side of Plymouth's pride
We sprang to follow he.

—Old Chanty.

"ALL people of the English stock, no matter on which side of the Atlantic they live, if they have any pride in the many feats of fierce prowess done by the men of their blood and race, should never forget this fight, although we cannot but feel grieved to find that such men—men of one race and speech; brothers in blood as well as in bravery—should ever have had to turn their weapons against one another."

These words are the generous tribute of that great American, Theodore Roosevelt, to the British captain and British crew of the brig-sloop *Reindeer,* whose tattered ensign, captured on the 28th of June, 1814, by the U.S.S. *Wasp,* is one of the treasured trophies in Annapolis.

The flag was brave and bright in its red, white and blue a hundred and some years ago. When the writer had the privilege of examining it in December, 1921, it was decrepit, faded till the red and white were almost indistinguishable in their dull browns, and the

blue had the sombre tint of a thundercloud. It was so full of holes and rents—the work of bullets, cannon balls or moths—that had it not been stitched down on a bed of linen it would have fallen apart. It is a large flag. Spread out it measured 19 feet 5 inches by 10 feet.

The *Wasp* was a ship-rigged sloop-of-war of 509 tons, 22 guns and in this particular action had 173 men. She had three masts and square sails on all three. She was built by the Americans in 1813 to replace their first *Wasp,* which had been captured and added to the British navy under the name *Loup Cervier.* The second *Wasp's* commander was Johnstone Blakely, her mission commerce destruction. She crossed the Atlantic in May, 1814, and for six weeks prowled off the coast of Ireland, capturing coasters and homeward bound ships that had parted company with their convoys.

Early in the morning of June 28th, off Land's End, almost in the mouth of the English Channel, she was in chase of two merchantmen, when a third sail was made out to windward. This was the *Reindeer.* She was a smaller vessel in every way than the *Wasp*—tubby, ten years old, built of fir and much used up by the hard service of long voyages and convoy duty, but known, with her crew, as the "pride of Plymouth." Captain and ship's company had been long together and established a name for themselves. One of the *Reindeer's* feats was bringing home safely in 1812 the great Jamaica convoy, in chase of which the American Commodore Rodgers twice crossed the Atlantic. She mounted 19 guns and measured 385 tons, and she had 118 men and boys. She was brig-rigged, with square sails on each of her two masts.

As the day broke the *Reindeer* discovered the *Wasp* in the vanishing dusk to the southwest, and without hesitation made sail for her, although her opponent was manifestly 50 per cent. her superior.

Captain Blakely of the *Wasp* had to let the fleeing merchantmen escape. He hauled up and stood for the bold stranger coming slowly down almost directly before the northeast wind.

So light was the breeze that the restless Atlantic was scarcely rippled by it and the vessels stood almost bolt upright on its surface; and so slowly did they creep towards one another all that summer forenoon that it was not until a quarter past one that the throb of the *Wasp's* drum beating to quarters indicated that the antagonists were nearly within striking distance. A few minutes afterward the ship put about and headed directly for the brig, thinking to weather her, but at 1.50 the *Reindeer* also tacked and stood on the same course. Each captain desired the weather gauge, and the British commander, having had it at the first, cleverly maintained it, although he had the slower vessel.

At half-past two the *Reindeer* tacked again, took in her staysails and steered for the foe.

The *Wasp,* abandoning the futile battle for the weather berth, put about for the last time at 2.50 and ran off with the wind a little forward of the port beam. Before tacking she had furled her royals, the highest sails she carried; and she now brailed her mizzen, so as to further reduce her speed and end the interval which must elapse before the conflict should open. The *Reindeer,* with equal gallantry, made more sail, hoisting her flying jib to help her close the remaining distance.



AN OLD-TIME PLYMOUTH BRIG—not the identical *Reindeer*, the pride of Plymouth, but one of her immediate successors. The flying jib set by the *Reindeer* to bring her up to her formidable and fatal opponent is the little sail outside of all the others to the left in the picture.

Gradually, in the light air, she drew up on the *Wasp's* weather quarter. In tactics it was almost a repetition of the duel between the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake* with the parts reversed. In this case the British vessel was the overtaking one, the American the one which waited in cool confidence, giving the oncoming vessel the choice of side. But in tactics the resemblance of the two conflicts ended. The *Chesapeake* was a slightly heavier vessel than the *Shannon.* The *Reindeer* was not nearly as strong as the *Wasp* in men, guns or tonnage.

Apparently the *Wasp* had no stern guns. If she had any, they would not bear on the *Reindeer* in the position from which she skilfully approached.

The British brig was only sixty yards away—exactly the *Chesapeake's* distance from the *Shannon*—when she fired the first shot. This was at 17 minutes past three, after almost twelve hours of manoeuvering. Five times, at two-minute intervals, as regularly as a salute, the bowchaser on the *Reindeer's* forecastle, a twelve-pound carronade, roared its message. It was a light gun; but, loaded with grape and round-shot, at that short distance it did deadly execution through the *Wasp's* stern-windows and quarter bulwarks.

For the moment, owing to the *Reindeer's* carefully chosen position, neither vessel could use her broadside guns. At 3.26 Capt. Blakely, seeing that the enemy, with more skill than the *Chesapeake's* captain had shown, would not come abreast of him, put his helm hard a-lee. This turned the *Wasp* so that her course would cross that of the *Reindeer.* The latter would have profited by bearing away and running across the *Wasp's* stern so as to rake her; but she failed to do so.

As the *Wasp* luffed up she fired each of her port broadside guns as they bore, from aft forward. For ten minutes the two vessels lay side by side, not sixty feet apart, pouring salvo after salvo into each other. In the tremendous explosions the faint breeze almost totally died away, and the combatants, motionless save for the rocking of concussion and recoil, lay almost yardarm to yardarm under a pall of cannon smoke.

Three to two were the odds against the *Reindeer* in weight of metal, and three to two in men; odds making victory impossible for her if both sides played the game, but not odds to make "the pride of Plymouth" flinch.

James in his "Naval Occurrences" tells how one of the *Reindeer* gunners was wounded in the head by a ramrod blown at close range from the *Wasp's* deck. The weapon had to be sawed off close to his skull before it could be extracted, but he refused to quit his gun. "If all the wounded of the *Reindeer* were as well able to fight as I am we should make the Americans strike!" he cried.

Captain William Manners, the young commander of the English brig, had been wounded early in the combat, a shot passing behind him and tearing away the calves of both legs. The vessels were at length almost touching, and, although they had so little way on that the response to the rudder was very slow, Capt. Manners put his helm hard a-weather and turned the *Reindeer's* bows for the *Wasp's* quarter, gathering his British boarders on his forecastle to try it with the steel.

Capt. Blakely was not caught unawares. "Boarders aft!" rang through the trumpet. The *Wasp's*

marines ran with their muskets. Some lined the quarter-deck, others reinforced the small-arms men in the ship's tops, those great fighting platforms at the mastheads. Under the bullet-proof bulwarks crouched one line of boarders, their naked cutlasses gleaming in the murk. Behind them were drawn the men with boarding pikes, and, training their weapons over the shoulders of these, in a third row stood the musketeers. From the tops above the sharp-shooters showered the approaching ship with volley after volley.



ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THE *REINDEER*—a tattered red ensign in the collection of trophy flags in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.

The vessels came grinding together, cannon smoke curling up between the gun crews who slashed and struck at one another through the squares of the open bow and quarter ports. Over their own forecastle barricade leaped the British seamen, to perish bravely on the bristling pikes and cutlass points or to fall under the hail of musket balls from the tops overhead; but, although well supported by the answering fire of the *Reindeer's* marines, they were killed or beaten back as fast as they came.

Though wounded again and a third time, Capt. Manners stood at his post, as resolute as when he had first sighted the *Wasp*. A grape shot passed through both his thighs, bringing him to the deck; but, maimed and bleeding to death, he sprang to his feet, rallying his men.

"Follow me, my boys, we must board again!" he cried.

It seems incredible that, with both legs reduced to mangled masses of flesh and bone, this British captain could even crawl from his position where he stood. But, as the generous historian, sometime President of the United States, says, his was "the indomitable courage which nothing but death could conquer."

Sword in hand, he sprang into the *Reindeer's* forerigging, to lead his men in person, as Nelson and Broke did, in the desperate adventure of boarding; nor, although they were now outnumbered nine to three, did one of his crew hang back.

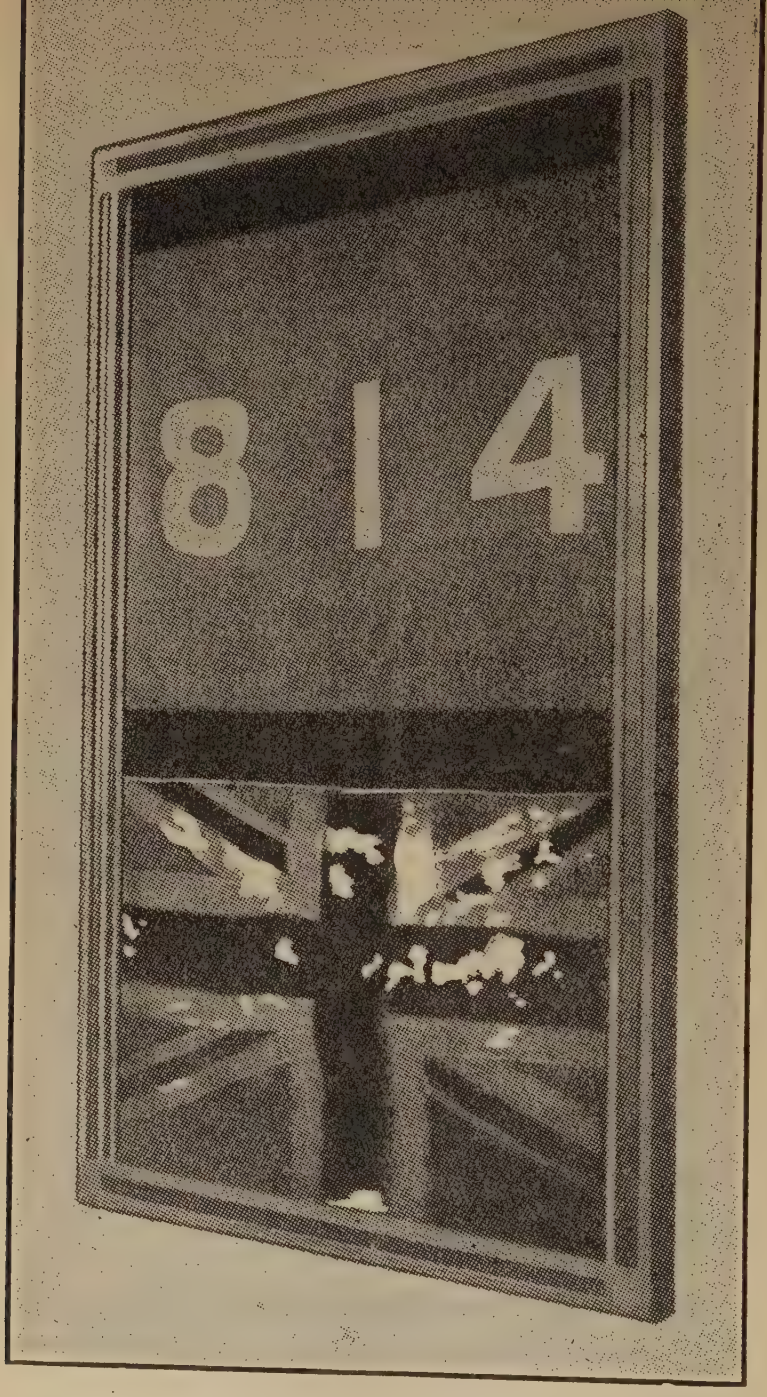
As he steadied himself for the leap to the *Wasp's* rail two balls from her maintop crashed through his skull, coming out below his chin. "Oh, God!" he cried, flinging his left hand to his forehead.

He swayed for a second on the sagging ratlines, brandishing his blade against the enemy which could kill, but could not conquer him. Then he fell back on his own deck, dead—sword in hand, face to the foe, and the brave red flag whose honor was his own still floating above him in the powder smoke. In Roosevelt's words, "No Norse Viking, slain over shield, ever died better."

After that the hundred and fifty unwounded men of the *Wasp's* crew made short work of the fifty survivors of the *Reindeer*.

"Boarders away!" called Capt. Blakely in turn, and with ringing cheers the *Wasps* swarmed over the hammock nettings and, after a short and furious struggle, hauled down the Red Ensign. It was the captain's clerk, the only officer left, who surrendered the *Reindeer* at 3.44, after twenty-seven minutes of most gallant fighting.

Of the 118 men and boys who went into action in the *Reindeer* 33 were killed and 34 were wounded. The *Wasp* lost 11 killed and 15 wounded of her crew of 173. Her broadsides had torn the soft-wood *Reindeer* completely in two in a line with her ports; her upper works, spare spars and deck fittings were one entire wreck. The *Wasp* could not get her into port and destroyed her the next day.



TWO "MYSTERY FLAGS"

In their case, in the collection of trophies in the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. The jack with "Avon" marked on the hoist, or part next the mast, is the lower one of the two flags shown.

XXIV.

A Duel in the Dark

BRAVE William Manners did not sacrifice the *Reindeer* and his own life and the lives of his Plymouth crew in vain. It may be remembered that when he flung the "pride of Plymouth" across the path of the vengeful *Wasp,* the latter was crowding every stitch of canvas in pursuit of two British merchantmen. These crept away to safety during the combat of the 28th of June; and for two months British commerce was freed from the stings of this particular destroyer.

Crammed with wounded and prisoners, the *Wasp* put into the French port of L'Orient a week after she had met the *Reindeer;* and the vigor of the latter's unavailing attack upon her may be gauged from the fact that she took until August 27 to refit. Peace reigned between Britain and France for the moment, but Britain's enemy found welcome and succor in the French ports her fleets had menaced so often and so long.

Johnstone Blakely, the Carolina captain of the *Wasp,* was one of the best of the good American naval men this war produced. By the end of August he had taken seven more vessels; and British cruisers, undaunted by the fate of the first of their pack, were again in full cry after him.

On the night of Sept. 1st there was a fight between the British brig-sloop *Avon* and the American raider; but the *Wasp,* like a hunted wolf, mangled this second

pursuer before the other sea-hounds came up, dodged a third weakling, and melted into the night.

Months later the British trading brig *Atalanta* arrived at Savannah with an American prize crew aboard. The *Wasp* had taken her on Sept. 21 in the vicinity of Madeira, and had sent her on, under the charge of Midshipman David Geisinger, with despatches. The midshipman and his prize crew became the sole survivors of a gallant ship's company. The *Wasp* never came home. What happened to her no man knows. Poetizers are prone to suggest that she perished from a secret wound from the dead *Reindeer's* antlers; that some shot-plug, overlooked in her French refit, or some plank-butt, started in that deadly cannonade, opened up in a gale at sea and drowned her with all on board. Whatever the truth of such speculation, the ablest commerce destroyer of the American navy in the War of 1812 "sank without a trace."

Late in October or early in November, 1814, a Swedish brig, the *Adonis,* arrived at Falmouth and reported that she had been stopped by the *Wasp* off the Cape Verde Islands. The Swedish brig had had on board two American officers, Lieut. Stephen Decatur McKnight and Midshipman James Lyman, prisoners of war from the *Essex,* who had been exchanged and were on their way home from Valparaiso by this indirect route. They transferred to the *Wasp* in the Atlantic, hoping thus to reach home sooner. They must have perished with her.

WHENCE, then, comes the British jack, marked *Avon* on the hoist, in the collection of trophy flags in the United States Naval Academy museum?

It is true that the *Wasp* fought the *Avon* and destroyed her. She was the vessel put down in the obscure battle of the night of Sept. 1, 1814. But Capt. Blakely did not know her name nor what happened to her. How, then, did he get her flag, and how did he get it home?

This is a problem which has puzzled both Messrs. H. C. Washburn and Sidney Gunn, successive curators of the Annapolis collection; for the gentlemen who have charge of these valued relics are most scrupulous that no spurious material be allowed into their thesaurus.

The *Avon* flag is a well-made British Union Jack of more careful design than many of its period. It is undoubtedly very old, and is faded and decayed away utterly in several places. It is folded up in a case, along with another flag, the history of which is unknown. This second flag is quite well preserved. It is of blue, with a red border all the way around and the figures "1814" in large white letters in the centre.

The *Avon* jack is a small flag for its period and supposed use. It is 9 feet 11 inches long and 4 feet 8 inches wide; the jack of the *Detroit,* for example, a ship of similar size to the *Avon,* is 12 feet long by 6 feet wide.

It is possible that some of the prize crew from the *Wasp,* who came home in the *Atalanta,* procured a British jack from her or some other ship and marked it *Avon* as a souvenir of the mystery-ship they had engaged, when they learned her name.

It is possible, too, but not very probable, that the *Avon's* jack was shot away in the engagement and blown on board the *Wasp,* for that vessel was to lee-

ward of her in the fight. If this were the case, it might have been sent home by Capt. Blakely with his despatches, or brought home by one of the *Wasp's* men in the prize brig and marked *Avon* when the name was learned.

The *Hornet's* pennant was clipped from her main truck by the first broadside of the *Peacock* when those two vessels fought their brief duel off the Demerara river; but it did not fall on board the opposing ship.

It is tantalizing that the record of the circumstances in which these trophies reached Annapolis in the first place has not always been preserved.

THE putting down of the *Avon* was a battle in the dark, as obscure when it was fought as the history of the *Avon* flag is today.

Capt. Blakely sighted four vessels, widely separated, in the dusk of the September evening. He made sail for the one to windward. This was the *Avon,* another tubby brig-sloop, like the *Reindeer,* one-third smaller, slower and weaker than the *Wasp.* She had a crew of 118 men and 16 guns. The *Wasp's* complement at the time was 160 men and 22 guns.

The *Avon* was slashing along with the wind abeam of her, fresh from the southeast.

Capt. the Hon. James Arbuthnot commanded this British brig. Quite possibly he was under orders to act in concert with the other vessels whose royals pricked the horizon at the time the *Wasp* gave chase; and he may have taken the *Wasp* for a friend, for as she overhauled him he commenced to signal with lanterns.

The uncertainty throughout this action emphasized

the crude methods of the time, when ships of the same nation sometimes fired into one another through not being able to make out the signals or hails addressed to them, and ships of nations at peace sometimes committed similar tragic blunders.

The *Avon* made the night signal at 7.34. Her officers were beginning to feel sure the approaching ship was an enemy, but at 8 o'clock the *Wasp* burned a blue light on her forecastle. This left them still uncertain. At 8.38, as the stranger still hung on, the *Avon* fired her stern-chase gun and a gun on the lee or starboard side. These would be warning shots, for the *Wasp* was not coming up directly behind, but on the opposite side. At 9.20 the *Wasp* had closed in on the *Avon's* weather quarter, and amid the roaring of the wind in the straining sails and the bursting of the seas boiling under the *Wasp's* bow and the *Avon's* stern, this dialogue took place in the dark:

Wasp first lieutenant—"Brig ahoy! What brig is that?"

Avon first lieutenant—"Ship ahoy! What ship is that?"

Wasp first lieutenant—"What?"

Avon first lieutenant—"What?"

Wasp first lieutenant—"WHAT BRIG IS THAT?"

Avon first lieutenant—"WHAT SHIP IS THAT?"

Wasp first lieutenant—"HEAVE TO AND YOU'LL FIND SOON ENOUGH WHAT SHIP THIS IS!"

Now thoroughly convinced of the hostility of the stranger, Capt. the Hon. James Arbuthnot ordered his

port foretopmast studdingsail to be set, to increase his vessel's speed, apparently intending to make a running fight of it till he could unite with his consorts.

At 9.29 the *Wasp* began firing upon the *Avon* with the selfsame bowchaser which the *Reindeer* had used when she went into battle nine weeks before. The *Avon* answered with her stern and quarter guns, this time in earnest. But she had neither the heart nor the head of the "pride of Plymouth." Even at the close range of speaking distance her cannon balls went wild.

One of the *Wasp's* shots brought down the *Avon's* gaff. The falling mainsail covered the starboard guns and their crews. While they were slashing their way with cutlasses out of this smothering tent the *Wasp* cleverly swung across the *Avon's* wake and took a position on the lee quarter, where the guns and crews were entangled, and poured in broadside after broadside.

As she ranged up, her men could see the marines in the *Avon's* tops, dark against the night sky or outlined by musket flashes. The *Wasp's* chain and bar shoe mowed away the main-rigging; then the whole mast went, falling on top of the wreck of the mainsail. Such carronades as had not been already crippled—the *Avon* had the usual set of sixteen kicking thirty-two-pounders—capsized or pulled their bolts out.

At ten o'clock, the *Avon* having been silent for some minutes, the humane American hailed: "Have you struck?" As he was to leeward, perhaps he was not heard. Toiling might and main in the dark, the *Avon* men got some of their dismounted guns to bear again, and at one minute past ten gave their British answer—a broadside. For twelve minutes more the

fight went on, the *Wasp* practically unharmed, the *Avon* a crippled wreck, half her driving-power—the mainmast and its sails—smothering her guns or dragging in the water. The first lieutenant was killed, the captain wounded, ten dead men littered the deck, thirty-two wounded crowded the surgeon's cockpit or fought grimly on, bleeding as they pulled on the gun tackles. Ragged and more ragged sounded the broadsides, then they became single shots, and these came further and further apart. Silence again, at twelve minutes past ten.

"Have you struck?" once more hailed Johnstone Blakely.

A lantern was waved and extinguished on board the *Avon,* and someone answered: "We strike. Sinking!"

"Secure the guns and lower a boat!" ordered Capt. Blakely.

As he spoke his masthead men hailed: "Sail close astern and coming up fast!"

"Cast loose the guns and stand by!" answered the captain. Ship-preservation, the first law of the seaman, demanded that he should see his own vessel safe first—although Nelson's men at Trafalgar and the Nile picked up drowning Frenchmen and fought the fire in flaming French hulls even while those hulls spat death into their decks!

At 10.36 the newcomer was close up and two more sails had appeared. Sheeting home her royals and crowding all other canvas that would draw, the *Wasp* made off. As she went by the new stranger she made her out as another brig-sloop of the *Reindeer* size, but there was no answer to her hail. The vessel was the

British brig *Castilian,* Capt. David Braimer, and she fired her lee guns at the *Wasp* within pistol shot. With the exception of trifling damage aloft the broadside missed the flying Yankee entirely.

The *Castilian* stood on in the direction of the thudding minute-guns which told of the *Avon's* distress. Those brigs worked to windward very poorly, and perhaps the breeze softened. It was midnight before the *Castilian* got up to the *Avon;* and just in time, for at 1 a.m., as the last groaning wounded man was hoisted over the rail, the *Avon* went down. She sank a hundred miles south and west of where the *Reindeer* found her grave, off the Land's End.

On into the dark sped the *Wasp.* The name of neither of the vessels she had fought in the night was known on board. It was classically appropriate that one of the two other ships which were approaching was a 20-gun sloop called the *Tartarus.* Tartarean darkness enshrouded the gallant American spitfire, if not from that moment, almost from that episode. But if the tattered flag shown at Annapolis is not actually the jack the ill-starred *Avon* flew that night, Capt. Johnstone Blakely and his missing crew of one hundred and sixty-two Americans are entitled to all the credit that would go with it, were it marked *Avon* in the blood of the men as brave as themselves who defended it.

XXV.

Who Won the War

THE War of 1812 ended happily in that it left neither nation victor nor vanquished. It would never have begun had not the ambitions of Napoleon forced Britain into a life and death struggle in which she was bound to offend the susceptibilities of neutrals; much as a householder, attacked by a thug at his own gate, may spoil his neighbor's flower bed in defending his own property.

American writers of the baser sort sometimes speak as though Britain had been beaten in the War of 1812. Against such may be set the following description by that great American authority, Admiral A. T. Mahan, of the condition of the United States in 1814, the final year of the war:

> The Government sat wringing its hands, amid the ruins of its capital and the crash of its resources; reaping the rewards of those wasted years during which, amid abounding warning, it had neglected preparation to meet the wrath to come. Monroe, the Secretary of State, writing from Washington to a private friend, July 3, 1814, said: "Even in this State the Government shakes to the foundation. Let a strong force land anywhere and what will be the effect?" At the end of the year Bainbridge, commanding the Boston Navy Yard, wrote the Department: "Yesterday we had to discharge

one hundred seamen, and could not pay them a cent of their wages. The officers and men have neither money, clothes nor credit, and are embarrassed with debts."

A year earlier the Columbian Sentinel had wept:

"Our coasts unnavigable to ourselves, though free to the enemy and the money-making neutral; our harbors blockaded; our shipping destroyed or rotting at the docks; silence and stillness in our cities; the grass growing upon the public wharves. . . In the district of Maine . . . there is not enough money left to pay the taxes."

One of the chief points at issue between Britain and America was Britain's assertion, under the heavy pressure of twenty years' war at sea, of the "right of search" for contraband cargoes and for British subjects liable to impressment in the Royal Navy. These searches were conducted in the ships of all nations encountered by British vessels of war. The "right of search" was denied by America. The terms of peace which closed the war left the quesiton undetermined, not through oversight on the part of America, but because America was unable to force the issue.

"It was dropped," says Admiral Mahan, "because it had to be dropped."

The American commissioners had originally specific instructions that impressment must cease. "If this encroachment of Great Britain is not provided against, the United States have appealed to arms in vain," had been the President's warning to Messrs. Bayard, Gallatin, Adams, Clay and Russell, the American commissioners. The encroachment was not

"provided against." The peace treaty signed on Christmas Eve, 1814, was silent on the subject because the United States had not won the war.

The necessities of Britain, fortunately, never again raised the question of the "right of search" to the acute stage, although there were rumblings over the feature of contraband cargoes during the Great War, which began one hundred years after the War of 1812 ended.

The United States invaded Canada at least once a year during the war. The American invasion was resisted, and resisted successfully. At Queenston Heights and Chateauguay, at Lundy's Lane and Stoney Creek and many another hard-fought field the invader was hurled back or, if momentarily successful, quickly forced to abandon his precarious hold. At the end of the war no British territory was in American possession; but we held Michillimackinac, the American gateway to the west, which we had won in the first weeks of the war, and the District of Maine, which we had taken in the east in the last months of the war as a "doorstep" from the sea into Canada.

Britain never invaded American territory for purpose of conquest, and Michillimackinac and Maine were given up when the war was over. British raids on Plattsburg, Baltimore, Washington and New Orleans were distractions to keep American armies at home or draw them away from the invasions of Canada. Some of these raids were disastrous to our arms, others were still more severe blows to American prestige. To have the capital in ashes and the seat of government in the possession of a foreign foe is a defeat which has not befallen Britain since the days of Wil-

liam the Conqueror. Yet Washington was in the hands of General Ross and Admiral Cockburn, August 24, 1814. The White House was in flames, the Capitol destroyed, the navy yard and arsenal gutted. But, in proof of the absence of British desire for conquest, private property was scrupulously respected, and as soon as the blow to governmental prestige had been delivered British ships and British troops turned back to the sea.

The War of 1812 was essentially a sea war. Its heroic land battles were not decisive of the general result. Their only value was determining the immediate possession of Canada; the ultimate possession of Canada was always dependent upon Britain's command of the sea. Admiral Mahan puts the situation very clearly in explaining the reasons for an attack on Montreal:

> "In short, the Canadian tree was rooted in the ocean, where it was nourished by the sea power of Great Britain. To destroy it, failing the ocean navy which the United States had not, the trunk must be severed; the nearer the root the better."

The trunk was not severed. The Canadian tree is still rooted in the ocean, nourished by the sea power of Great Britain; that same sea power which was begrudged two, only two, post-Jutland ships at Westminster in 1922, after being pared and whittled down to a one-power standard by the Washington Conference.

In the fierce conflicts of the three years of war, which ran over into a fourth year, 1815, ere the slow-spreading news of peace came, Britain captured three

American frigates, burned or caused to be burned two others; and blockaded three out of the remaining four; captured two sloops-of-war, burned two, dismantled one, and blockaded two; captured six brigs and blockaded seven; and captured two schooners, burned a third and blockaded four more. In short the British navy captured or destroyed eighteen vessels of the United States Navy at sea or on the seacoast, and permanently blockaded sixteen others. Admiral Mahan, placing the number of "commission pendants" in the United States Navy at the beginning of the war at twenty-two, says that over fifty per cent. of the navy was lost.

Britain lost three frigates, three sloops-of-war, seven brigs and five schooners to the United States at sea; and of these eighteen vessels three were recaptured, reducing the vessels lost to fifteen. In mere point of numbers the captures on either side were nearly equal; a substantial proof of equal valour and equal skill on the part of our ancestors, whether fighting under the Union Jack or Stars and Stripes.

But there is this noteworthy difference: None of the frigates we captured from the Americans, although all were ably defended, was "fought till not a stick would stand." The resistance was not desperate and the captured vessels, in every case, were triumphantly brought into port and added to the British Navy.

Not so with the British vessels. Of the three frigates, the *Guerriere* and *Java* fought until they were so shattered they could hardly keep afloat, and their captors had to burn them. The *Macedonian,* the only frigate which the Americans retained, fought till she had not enough spars left to carry sail for steerage purposes.

Following is a list of all the sea-going vessels of the United States navy in the War of 1812, and what happened to them:

Frigates—

United States,

Congress

and

Macedonian (captured from British), all blockaded at New London from December, 1813, to the end of the war;

President, captured by British, Jan. 15, 1815;

Chesapeake, captured by British, June 1, 1813;

Constellation, blockaded at Norfolk, Va., for the duration of the war.

Constitution, survived the war, the only American frigate left at sea.

Essex (I.), captured by British, June 22, 1814.

Essex (II.), also named *Columbia,* destroyed to prevent capture by British, Aug. 24, 1814.

Boston, destroyed to prevent capture by British at Washington, Aug. 24, 1814.

Sloops-of-war—

Adams, destroyed to prevent capture by British, Sept. 3, 1814;

Ontario

and

Erie, never got to sea during the war;

Peacock, survived the war;

Hornet, dismantled herself to escape British capture;

Wasp (I.), captured by British, Oct. 18, 1812;

Wasp (II.), lost at sea, 1814;

Argus (II.), destroyed to prevent capture by British, Aug. 24, 1814;

Frolic, captured by British, April 20, 1814;

Louisiana, survived the war.

Brigs—

Argus (I.), captured by British, Aug. 14, 1813;

Syren, captured by British, July 12, 1814;

Nautilus, captured by British, July 16, 1812;

Enterprise, survived the war;

Vixen, captured by British, Nov. 22, 1812;

Viper, captured by British, Jan. 17, 1813.

Rattlesnake, captured by British, June 22, 1814;

Of nine other brigs, two were store-ships, and seven were blockaded and never got to sea during the war.

Schooners and sloops—

Alligator, attacked, escaped, sank, afterwards raised;

Asp, captured by British, July 14, 1813, and abandoned.

Surveyor, captured by British, June 12, 1813;

Caroline, burned by British at New Orleans, Dec. 27, 1814;

Despatch, survived the war;

Torch, Eagle, Spitfire, Prometheus, blockaded and never got to sea.

It is questionable whether these schooners should be included in the "sea-going navy" list of the United States. As the present list does not deal with the lake marine on either side,—that subject having been considered extensively, but not exhaustively, in an earlier volume—possibly it should also exclude such of the above schooners and sloops as were for coastal defence

only. On the other hand even tenders and despatch boats have been included in the number of British schooners captured; and it should be remembered that it was not the policy of the United States, but the might of the British Navy, which prevented the American vessels from going to sea. The last four in particular were specifically intended for the destruction of Britain's foreign commerce, as were the blockaded brigs *Spark, Firefly, Saranac, Boxer II.* and other non-starters.

How much of the United States Navy spent its time during the war may be gathered from Theodore Roosevelt's description of the *Constellation,* blockaded at Craney Island, near Norfolk. She "was anchored in the middle of the narrow channel, flanked by gunboats, her lower ports closed, not a rope left hanging over the sides; the boarding nettings, boiled in half-made pitch till they were hard as wire, were triced outward toward the yardarms, and loaded with kentledge to fall on the attacking boats when the tricing lines were cut, while the carronades were loaded to the muzzles with musket balls and depressed so as to sweep the water near the ship. Twice a force of British, estimated by their foes to number 2,000 men, started off at night to carry the *Constellation* by surprise. They never ventured to make the attack. However, she was unable to get to sea and remained blockaded to the close of the war."

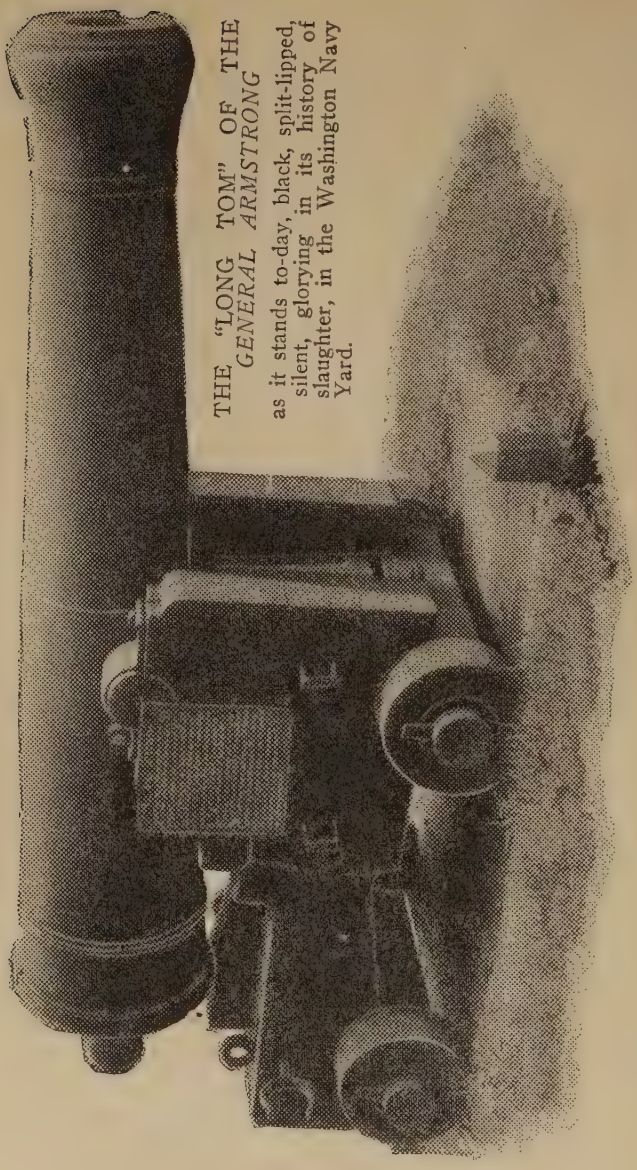
Somewhat like the German High Seas Fleet after Jutland!

No British crew in the war of 1812 ever hauled down their flag when an American crew in similar circumstances could have kept it aloft. More than

that, no American vessel in the war was defended with the desperate valour which kept the British flag flying on the *Guerriere, Java, Macedonian, Reindeer, Frolic,* and *Dominica* long beyond dictates of discretion and even the requirements of honor.

Who won the War of 1812?

The British Navy won the War of 1812.



THE "LONG TOM" OF THE *GENERAL ARMSTRONG*

as it stands to-day, black, split-lipped, silent, glorying in its history of slaughter, in the Washington Navy Yard.

XXVI.

Old Bloody Tom

THERE is a great black gun in the Navy Yard at Washington whose split and blistered lips could tell a tale to thrill the adventurous of every age and the generous under every flag. It is a forty-two-pounder, the "Long Tom" of the American privateer brig *General Armstrong*. On the 26th of September, 1814, Capt. Samuel C. Reid brought the *Armstrong* into Fayal, in the Azores, and began to fill her water tanks. The port was neutral territory, and this fact presented a problem to three British commanders whose vessels soon afterwards sighted the commerce-destroyer—the *Plantagenet,* ship-of-the-line, a 74, commanded by Capt. Robert Lloyd; the frigate *Rota,* a 38, commanded by Capt. Philip Somerville, and the 18-gun brig *Carnation,* Capt. Geo. Bentham. Should they allow this raider to lie peacefully at anchor, keeping three ships out of action until some dark night when she could slip to sea to work havoc among British merchant fleets? Or should they end her career? That was what they debated as the September sun descended.

At sunset the *Carnation* anchored close by the privateer and the latter, taking the hint, moved further in shore under the guns of a Portuguese battery. There was exchange of hails between the privateer and one of the ship's boats as the latter pulled ashore in the dusk.

Lieut. Robert Fausett was sent in the *Plantagenet's* pinnace into the port, to inquire what the privateer-brig was doing, what was her nation and what was her force. The brig was already shifting her berth, dropping astern with the tide. This brought the pinnace closer to her than the officer had intended. The *Armstrong* hailed to keep off, but before the boat could get out of the way the brig opened fire on her and killed two of the men at the oars and wounded seven others.

The British captains decided that it was their duty to protect British commerce first and Portuguese neutrality secondly; so when the moon sank, seven boats from the *Rota* and the *Plantagenet,* commanded by Lieut. Wm. Matterface, of the *Rota,* and filled with 180 men, pulled away in the direction of the privateer, with muffled oars. They had a long hard row against tidal currents; and the *Carnation,* which was to support them, could not move for lack of wind.

Capt. Reid was prepared for them, although the *Armstrong* showed no signs of life. As the boats neared, the bluejackets could see boarding nettings triced up from the bulwarks to the height of the lower yards, stretched outwards by purchases from the yard-arms, and filled with pieces of stone and iron from the ballast, so that if cut their contents would crush the assailants. As the crews speculated on how they were to get aboard there was a vivid flash and a deafening roar from "Long Tom," and the great gun belched its barrel-full of old spikes, bullets, fragments of copper, brass and iron, links of chain, knife-blades, and splintered cannon balls, full into the rowers' ranks.

With cheers that drowned the shrieks of the wounded, the British tars dashed in. They were met with a broadside from the *Armstrong's* eight long nine-pounders. Then "Long Tom" roared again, and the nine-pounders, and the muskets. The brig was manned by ninety choice American seamen, all determined to save their vessel or sell their lives dearly.

Again and again the British boats tried to board, and again and again "Long Tom" mowed the boarders down. Lieutenant Matterface was killed. The *Rota's* second, who succeeded him, was wounded. The *Rota's* third took his place. He, too, was killed. Her Lieutenant of Marines, the only officer left, tried to lead a boarding party over the brig's bulwarks and was wounded. The *Armstrong* was a floating fort, impregnable to all the bluejackets in the world, so long as they had to approach in open boats. The forty-two-pounder and the nine-pounders, well manned and plied unceasingly, were more than a match for the muskets and launch-carronades of the seven attacking boats; and the bluejackets were unable to get near enough to end the combat with pike and cutlass.

For hours through the tropic night the combat raged, like that of the *Revenge* and the Fifty-Three off Flores in the Azores two centuries before. But Sir Richard Grenville's men had at least a deck to stand on and bulwarks to fight behind. The dogged Britons in the boats of the *Plantagenet* and *Rota* had neither. Herded between the crowded thwarts of open row boats, they were brandishing pistol and pike, cutlass and musket against cannon balls, grapeshot, canister and the equivalent of the modern shrapnel. They were slaughtered like sheep; yet they died like lions.

In the dusk of the dawn three boats of the seven crept back, laden to the gunwales with wounded and dead. Two others had been stove in and sunk. Two more could not move away from the slaughter spot, so badly were they cluttered with mangled men. Thirty-four British seamen gave their lives in this badly planned, nobly executed attempt. Eighty-six were wounded.

The stout-hearted, heavy-handed defenders of the brig were as safe behind their bulwarks and boarding nettings as the men who held the concrete pill-boxes on the Western Front. Only two Americans had been killed in the all-night battle, and seven wounded.

But the British bulldog's grip relaxes only with death. By daylight the sore-smitten assailants tried the way they should have tried in the first place. The brig *Carnation* swept in to a position abreast of the privateer, and ran out her guns. This meant a duel broadside to broadside. Every British cannon ball that missed would plough neutral Portuguese soil; but the neutrality of Portugal was less important than the hundred and twenty British casualties already incurred.

Capt. Reid, of the *Armstrong,* knew her hour had come. An eight-inch auger and flint and steel were his last resource. He landed his crew and all the light guns, leaving "Long Tom." He seized a stone convent on the hill above the anchorage, turning out the Portuguese nuns to make room for his nine-pounders. He scuttled his brig and set her on fire; and "Long Tom," scarce cooled after his night's exertion in the shambles, glowed red hot again ere he sank hissing among the embers of the wreck.

Capt. Lloyd, of the *Plantagenet,* was censured in official quarters for violating the neutrality of the Portuguese island; yet it is difficult to see how he could have faced his own mirror without doing as he did. The neutrality which only provided a harbour where a destroyer of British commerce could replenish her stores and shoot passing British bluejackets with impunity had no sanctity which could be violated. The Portuguese usually tried to be fair in the preservation of their neutrality, in the war between Britain and America. This was one of the times they failed utterly, and the British navy had to take the law into its own hands.

THIS tale of blood poured out like water by brave men battling against brave men is not the only one lurking darkly within the grim and splintered mouth of this grisly gun.

The great combat which ended with "Long Tom's" drowning gurgles in the azure waters of the Azores was the last in his lurid career, but only one of many. First cast in the cannon-foundries of France, the old man-killer fought with his brethren in the main battery of the French ship *Hoche* when she was beaten to death by British broadsides in 1780. Later, like a slave of slaughter, the gun was sold to the United States of America; then to the black men of Hayti, who wanted an army and navy like civilized nations. Back to New York came the gun after service in a Haytian privateer. The sea-mists of Battery Park pitted its sides with rust until the *General Armstrong* had to be fitted out. For almost ninety years after the *Armstrong* found her watery nest the cannon lay in

the wreck, washed by the warm Atlantic tides. The World's Fair of 1893 brought strange gifts to Chicago, that metropolis of the American mid-west, which was but a looted trading post when the *Armstrong* fought her fight—a Viking ship from Norway, a whaler from New Bedford, caravels from Spain, and "Long Tom," resurrected from the Azores, the gift of the Government of Portugal. That is how the black and pitted forty-two-pounder comes to crouch now in Washington Navy Yard.

Harsh angles of the German guns whose camouflage-paint is peeling off in Canadian parks show signs of gaining mellowness and dignity and blending into the landscape. But not so "Long Tom" in the Navy Yard. The whole expression of that ancient implement of destruction justifies the Elizabethans who classified their guns as culverins, sakers, demi-cannon, cannon and "murtherers." This gun has slaughtered under every flag from white to black, under the drapeau blanc of King Louis, under the red, white or blue ensigns of King George's navy, under the colors of King Christophe, which were at times in effect the skull and crossbones, and under the Stars and Stripes. "Long Tom" is pre-eminently a "murtherer."

Reverence for the ancient landmarks of heroism, though it amount at times to affection, is not sufficient to suppress the desire that this gun should be broken up; not because he took British lives, but because he took so many lives; because, like famine or pestilence, he wasted all flesh, French and English, British and American, black and white.

One would like to see him destroyed, like War itself, which we were all so busy ending five years ago,

and which we are all so busy expecting to-day. "Long Tom" is a trophy, a monument, but a trophy and a monument that might be spared. He suggests none of the triviality and all of the horror of the game which used to give children the nightmare in the days of Queen Victoria:

Who comes around the house
  At this time of night?
  Old Bloody Tom
With his nightcap on.



This is not the actual flag of the *Adams,* destroyed in a British raid into Maine, Sept. 3rd, 1814. The *Adams'* ensign may have perished with her. Apparently the British victors, in their usual matter-of-fact fashion, did not preserve it, nor any memento of the eleven flags they captured on that occasion. The flag shown is, however, a reproduction of the one under which the *Adams* was chased over much of the water of the world. Note the fifteen stars in a circle and the fifteen stripes—the usual pattern of an American naval ensign of the period. The stripes were reduced to thirteen in 1818.

XXVII.

Eleven Vanished Stars-and-Stripes

THE world has heard more about Bill Adams, mythical winner of the battle of Waterloo, than of the frigate *Adams,* actual victim of the battle of Hampden; and infinitely more about John Hampden and the ship money in 1637 than about Hampden, Me., and the ships destroyed there in 1814.

No existing mementoes of the frigate *Adams* are known; yet her flag is but one of eleven which, if they had not shrivelled in embers over a century ago, might well be preserved in any British collection of battle trophies.

The *Adams* was a hybrid. She was a small frigate of 560 tons, built at New York at a cost of $76,662 in 1799. At Washington she was later cut down to a sloop, which means that her quarterdeck and forecastle batteries were removed and her 28 guns were carried on one deck, open to the sky. Then she was lengthened into a heavy corvette of 760 tons, with two more gun ports in each side, and a spar deck running the length of her above the guns. She was built by contract, and one of the contractors finished his work too soon. She was six inches shorter on one side than on the other; and consequently sailed badly on one tack. Many yachts to-day have that failing.

The *Adams* did not accomplish much in the war of 1812. The first year she spent suffering many things from many contractors. After she was put in com-

mission under Capt. Charles Morris she lay blockaded in the Potomac for four months. On Jan. 18, 1814, she succeeded in slipping out. Commerce destruction was then almost the sole form of naval activity left open to the United States, and the *Adams,* manned by a picked crew of 248 seamen, principally masters and mates of the American merchant service, steered for the African Gold Coast. From there she prowled along the British commerce lanes—to Cape Palmas, the Canaries, Cape de Verd, along the Equator and northward through the West Indies. She got a few paltry prizes, laden with palm oil—the literal, not the allegorical variety—and some ivory; but her only promising capture was the big Indiaman *Woodbridge,* whose crowded sails loomed up through a mist on the 25th of March. The *Adams* boats were in the act of boarding her when the fog blew away and the horizon fairly bristled with topsails. Twenty-five deep-laden merchantmen the chuckling Yankee commerce destroyers counted from the *Adams'* rigging; but ere they had time to secure their first prize the last of the vanishing fog wreaths revealed a British seventy-four and a frigate, spreading studdingsails and all the paraphernalia of pursuit. Leaving the *Woodbridge,* the *Adams* ran, ran for two days and two nights, shedding such stores as she could to lighten herself, with the British bulldogs on her heels. On the third day, fearing to leave their convoy too far astern, they relinquished the pursuit; and the *Adams* sailed on through the Indies, arriving in Savannah on the first of May.

Thence she started on that wild-goose chase which had twice baffled Commodore Rodgers—the interception of England's Jamaica convoy. Unlike Rodgers,

Capt. Morris actually sighted the convoy; but a seventy-four, three frigates and two brigs frightened him off, and he steered north for the banks of Newfoundland, and found little there but fogs and ice. Crossing over to Ireland, the *Adams* celebrated the Fourth of July by chasing two merchantmen into the Shannon river. Starting home, she herself was chased all day on July 15 by the 36-gun frigate *Tigris,* Capt. Henderson. The *Tigris* was to leeward and chased the *Adams* so hard that the latter threw her quarterdeck guns overboard and cut away her anchors. At dark, it fell calm, and the *Adams,* swinging out her boats, towed diligently all night and by morning was clear of pursuit.

But the British navy, after the preliminary reverses of the war, now ruled the sea at the threshold of the United States as thoroughly as in the English Channel, and two days later two more frigates sighted the *Adams* and chased her. The nearer one was tubby and slow and fell astern; but the other held on grimly till a shift of the wind put the lop-sided corvette on her favorite tack and she got away.

The *Adams'* troubles were not over, but were culminating. The prizes she had taken since leaving Savannah in May were only ten in number and all poor. After she had sighted the Maine coast, homeward bound, she discovered a small vessel, the British brig *Rifleman,* Capt. Pearce, and gave chase. The *Rifleman* skipped like a frightened deer, and a fog came down. While the topsails of the chase could still be discerned through the mist the *Adams* fetched up hard and fast on Isle au Haute.

This was on Aug. 17. By throwing overboard

spars and provisions, a task to which her crew must by this time have become thoroughly accustomed, the *Adams* got herself off with a high tide, and made the mouth of the Penobscot river.

But Maine was no longer indisputably American territory. Britain needed a passage from Halifax to Quebec, if troops had to be poured into Canada, and towards that end Moose Island, in Maine, had been seized and held since July 11, 1814. Gen. Sherbrooke and his troops were on their way to complete the seizure of the District of Maine when the *Adams* put into the Penobscot.

The battered American ship would have done better to have left the spitfire *Rifleman* alone; for the latter, not content with leading her on to the rocks of Isle au Haute, brought down a flotilla of two line-of-battle ships, three frigates, three sloops and ten transports laden with troops.

The *Adams* ran up the Penobscot to Hampden, 27 miles inland. Her remaining guns were landed and formed in a battery on a high bank. Her crew, now numbering 220 men, was used as a nucleus for the militia, who had been called out to defend the country against the invaders. Accordingly 1,400 men manned the high hill fronting the town, with field pieces supporting them in the woods. Twenty-three 18-pounder cannon commanded the river, from a wharf near the *Adams* and an embankment a quarter of a mile below her.

Six hundred British soldiers and one hundred and twenty British seamen and marines came up the river leisurely in boats from H.M.S. *Bulwark* and H.M.S. *Dragon*. When the militia saw them they ran. The

cannon on the wharf and the hill roared in vain. A rocket-boat led the British advance, and her pyrotechnics struck terror into the raw troops. The British stormed the hill with the loss of but one seaman killed and eight soldiers wounded.

Capt. Morris was forced to the Hibernian expedient of saving his vessel by setting her on fire. She burned to the water's edge and sank, September 3, 1814.

The British force had already taken the town of Castine. Two ships besides the *Adams* were burned by the Americans at Hampden. From there the British swept in triumph into Bangor; and here they burned a ship, a brig, three schooners and a sloop. They also captured a copper-bottomed brig, pierced for eighteen guns, and a privateer of sixteen guns completing the tale of eleven vessels taken or destroyed. The privateer was named the *Decatur;* and one would like to be sure that this was the same *Decatur* which captured the British schooner *Dominica* after such heroic resistance south of Bermuda, August 5, 1813. That *Decatur* hailed from Charleston, S.C.; but it is quite possible that she, like the *Adams,* had been chased into this Maine port.

For the remainder of the war, and until April 27, 1815, this part of the District of Maine was a British post, a stepping stone for the forces bound for Quebec, the centre of a brisk trade with St. John and Halifax, and so prosperous that the American inhabitants openly mourned the peace which restored the Stars and Stripes.

XXVIII.

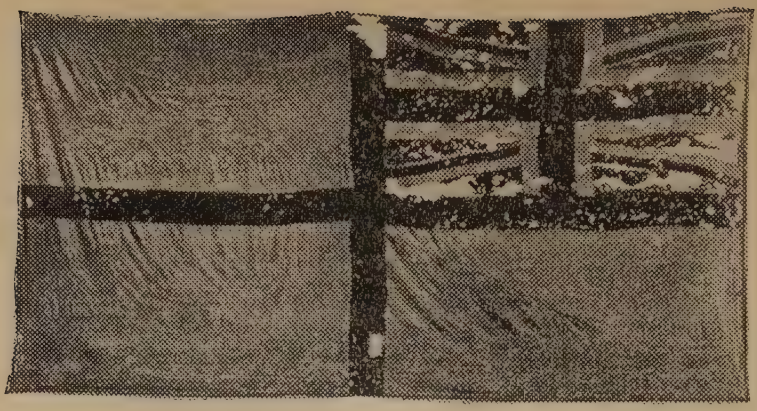
Two Pigmies and a Giant

A PAIR of small cruisers, H.M.S. *Cyane* and H.M.S. *Levant,* were stretching along the Atlantic, two hundred miles east of Madeira, on the 20th of February, 1815. Two valuable British convoys had sailed with them from Gibraltar that week, and the sloops of war, ten miles apart, were ranging the seas for their protection.

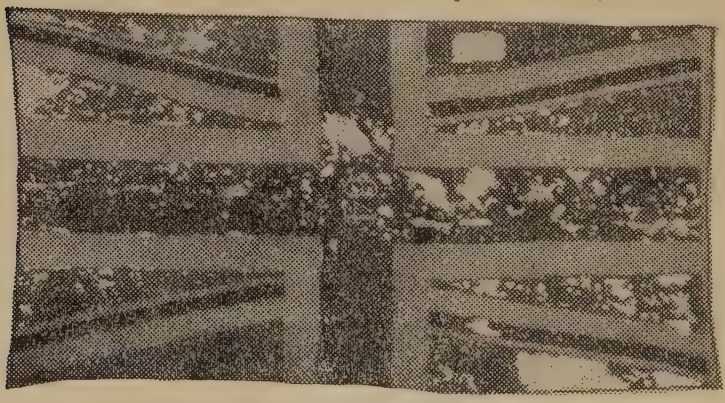
Leagues and leagues away they sighted the U.S.S. *Constitution,* of three times the fighting power of either of them, the only American frigate left on the oceans of the world; and she sighted them. All three captains, Charles Stewart, of the *Constitution,* Gordon Thomas Falcon, of the *Cyane,* and the Hon. George Douglass, of the *Levant,* were yet ignorant of the important fact that the War of 1812 had been ended by the Peace of Ghent on Christmas Eve, 1814.

The *Cyane* and the *Levant* had just the same chance against the *Constitution* as two ten-year-old school boys would have against an active master of thirty; one or both of them might escape a thrashing at his hands but neither nor both could beat him. The *Constitution's* problem was not how to resist two enemies, but, as Admiral Mahan has pointed out, how to conduct the contest that neither enemy should get away.

Bulldog British grit, which came close to meriting the epithet bullheaded, solved the *Constitution's* problem; yet it is impossible to withhold praise for the



THE *CYANE'S* FLAG AT ANNAPOLIS
A white ensign, 32 ft. 2 in. by 17 ft. 11 in.



THE *CYANE'S* JACK AT ANNAPOLIS
A flag, 14 ft. 10 in. by 8 ft.



THE *LEVANT'S* FLAG AT ANNAPOLIS
A red ensign, 19 ft. 2 in. by 10 ft. 9 in.

FLAGS WHICH TELL OF HEROIC EFFORT WHICH SAVED TWO BRITISH CONVOYS

Three flags hang in the trophy collection in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md., in celebration of the *Constitution's* last triumph. One is the White Ensign of the *Cyane* and another is her jack. It is a trifle galling to see another flag shown in the trophy collection as the "Ensign of the British ship *Levant.* Capt. the Hon. George Douglas. Captured by the United States frigate *Constitution.* Capt. Charles Stewart." The *Levant's* flag is no more a trophy-emblem than the *Frolic's,* and even less than the *Avon* and *Beresford* flags, mentioned in preceding chapters. The *Levant's* capture was exceedingly transitory. The conventional design of the Union Jack in it, when compared with the rude patterns on the *Cyane* flags and others of unquestioned authenticity, suggests the possibility that the trophy was manufactured in America afterwards, to immortalize an ephemeral triumph. Of course, Capt. Charles Stewart may have brought the *Levant's* flag home with him when he had to leave the *Levant* behind. Although the *Levant* was in British hands again within three weeks of her experience, the Americans built another vessel, called it by her name, and kept her in their navy till she disappeared at sea in 1860. The *Cyane,* or her successor, also figured in the United States navy lists until the Civil War.

As Britons we should greatly honor these flags. They are not tokens of defeat, but the surviving symbols of the patriotism which inspired three hundred men and boys, almost all of English birth, to face death, wounds, and an arduous imprisonment, in order to prevent a foreign commerce-destroyer from ravaging their merchant fleets.

masterly and workmanlike manner in which "Old Ironsides" proceeded to the solution. In this fight the *Constitution* was steered with the wheel she had taken from the *Java,* after her own was shot away in action with that vessel; but Commodore Bainbridge, who had then commanded her, had been succeeded by Capt. Charles Stewart.

To prevent a junction the *Constitution* cracked on sail till her main royalmast carried away, but the little British vessels, deciding that the convoys must be protected at all costs, succeeded in getting together and solemnly drew up in battle line on the starboard tack. They tried to postpone the actual closing until darkness should give them a better fighting chance; but, failing in that, they shortened sail for action, forming in line ahead 300 feet apart. The *Cyane,* being slightly the stronger of the two, took the post of peril, nearer the approaching *Constitution.*

The great American ship opened just after 6 o'clock. Her 24-pounder long-guns drew blood from the start, while the *Cyane's* short-range carronades could not bite.

It may be remembered that the *Constitution* carried thirty long 24-pounders on her main deck, and twenty-three other heavy guns. The *Cyane* had twenty-two 32-pounder carronades on her main deck and eight 18-pounder carronades and two long sixes on quarterdeck and forecastle. The *Levant* had eighteen 32-pounder carronades and two long nines. In *number* of guns the two British ships almost equalled the one American, but the guns lacked weight and range, and men to work them.

Against the *Constitution's* crew of 472 the *Cyane*

had 171 and the *Levant* only 131; and forty-two of the British "sailors" were little boys. The vessels themselves were midgets compared to the *Constitution.* The latter's sides were of double their thickness, and her tonnage was 1,567. The *Cyane* measured 539 tons; the *Levant* 464. Greater size in a sailing vessel means greater speed and less vulnerability to cannon shot.

The *Constitution* came past the *Cyane* at a distance of 300 yards, smashing her thin bulwarks with cannon balls, and mowing down her boys and men with musketry. The smoke from the blazing batteries formed a sulphurous tent in the twilight, through which the topsails of the combatants barely showed. At 6.20 the *Constitution* loomed abreast of the second British ship, the *Levant,* and the first British vessel, although shattered, gallantly luffed for her huge antagonist's port quarter.

Then Capt. Stewart did two things—one clever, one cruel. War is always cruel and seldom clever. He poured a broadside into the *Levant,* which was comparable to a thirty-year-old pugilist smashing a ten-year-old boy in the face; then he swung his afteryards and *backed* through the smoke so as to cross the *Cyane's* bows.

Backing a sailing ship with accuracy requires nerve, skill and luck. Capt. Stewart had all three. After another splintering broadside into the *Cyane* he went ahead again at the *Levant.*

That 400-ton vessel, although terribly mauled, was wearing, or turning around before the wind, to help her consort. The *Constitution* sailed across her stern and raked her twice. The poor little thing was so

hard hit she could not turn back. The *Cyane,* in not much better plight, flung herself between the *Constitution* and her victim, although she had no gear left to control her except the larboard fore-brace. She fired her port broadside at the *Constitution's* starboard bow. The big ship wore short around, raked her, and ranged up close, reloading to finish her with the starboard broadside, when the *Cyane,* with five guns dismounted, twelve men killed, twenty-six wounded, and ten shots between wind and water, fired a lee-gun and surrendered.

This was at 6.50, forty minutes after commencing the action. The marvel is that there was enough of the *Cyane* left to float a prize-crew.

Hastily flinging some sailors and a guard of marines aboard the captured *Cyane,* the *Constitution* repaired her cut rigging and other damages and made sail after the smaller sloop. She had had three men killed and fifteen wounded, and some gear shot away. The *Levant* was still lurching down to leeward, being unable to sail in any other direction. She was two miles off when the *Cyane* surrendered.

The rays of the rising moon penetrating the clinging cannon smoke at 8.30, showed the plucky little vessel close-hauled on the wind, beating back to learn the fate of her long-silent consort. The repairs she had effected rendered her manageable, but the *Constitution* had no difficulty in holding the weather gauge and passing her on the opposite tack. As the towering sails of the monster American blotted out the breeze she poured seven hundredweight of cannon balls into the little sloop. The *Levant* replied with less than three hundred pounds, her entire broadside, and much

of that failed to go through the twenty-inch sides of the big ship. Then the *Constitution* swung on her heel and ran across the *Levant's* stern, raking her from end to end.

The Hon. George Douglass had done all that man could do, for the honor of his flag and the rescue of his consort. It was plain that the *Cyane* was lost. He had twenty-three killed and sixteen wounded out of his crew of one hundred and thirty-one; a steep butcher's bill. He put the *Levant* before the wind and crowded sail on her; but she was so built that the stern guns could not be worked while she was being steered; and when they gave up firing the stern chasers her wheel was shot away. At 10.40 the *Levant* surrendered.

But both convoys were safe. What would have happened had the *Constitution* ravaged them is a question for students of international law. Warships captured after the peace were held lawful prize on both sides. The *Constitution* might have won a million pounds of loot—and kept it—if she had come up with the merchant fleets those Britons died to save.

IT is a thousand miles southwards from Madeira to the Cape Verdes. It was to San Jago in those islands that Capt. Stewart of the U.S.S. *Constitution* steered with the captured British ships *Cyane* and *Levant,* and on the tenth of March, 1815, he anchored off Porto Praya. He had picked up a merchant brig, and he landed a hundred of his prisoners to fit her out as a cartel.

Being an officer-prisoner in the War of 1812 was not a great misfortune. You might live in the ward-

room of the ship which captured you until released on parole, and then all you had to do was not to serve against the enemy again until some similarly situated enemy officer had been exchanged for you. But if you were a seaman it was different. Capt. Stewart kept the captive British tars in the hold shackled hand and foot, twenty-four hours out of the twenty-four; and they had three pints of water a day, while the tropic sun boiled the pitch in the deck seams above them. Those who were let out to prepare the cartel brig did not forget their captor's kindness.

At noon on March 11, when the merchantman was being brought under the stern of the *Constitution* for more prisoners the masthead lookouts reported the upper canvas of a large ship showing above the fog to leeward.

"An Indiaman!" shouted Capt. Stewart gleefully. "Lieut. Shubrick, call all hands and make sail!"

Again the lookouts reported a sail.

"Another Indiaman!" exclaimed Capt. Stewart. "Our fortune's made! Sheet home the foretopsail! and heave the cable in with a will!"

"Another sail!" called the lookouts. "They're heavy frigates all!"

"Lay the axe to the cable!" roared Capt. Stewart, and within ten minutes of the sighting of the first set of topsails the *Constitution* was starting seaward, her topgallant yards going aloft as she raced, and a string of signal pennants snapping instructions to her two prizes which followed in her wake.

The hundred men in the prisoners' brig flung themselves on their guards. Within five minutes they had scrambled ashore, bundled the astonished Portuguese

garrison out of a waterfront battery, and began bombarding their late jailers with the captured guns. Capt. Stewart's parting souvenir from his hundred guests was a cannonball through his cabin windows.

The stranger sails seven miles off were British warships—the *Leander,* 50 guns, Capt. Sir George Ralph Collier, K.C.B.; the *Newcastle,* 50, Capt. Lord George Stewart; and the *Acasta,* 40, Capt. Robert Kerr. They were heading for the land on the starboard tack. The *Constitution* and her prizes stood out on the port tack, cutting adrift their towing boats, while they had no time to hoist up. They passed three miles to windward of the British squadron, and the latter turned and tacked in pursuit.

The prizes, being little ships, first lagged in the chase. The *Cyane* was only 125 feet long, 15 feet shorter than the modern fishing schooner *Bluenose;* and the *Levant* was still smaller. The American Stewart signalled his first lieutenant, B. F. Hoffman, in the *Cyane,* to tack. He did so, and stood off northwest, getting a harmless broadside from the *Leander,* four miles away, as he passed.

Lieut. Hoffman kept on going, and did not stop till he reached the other side of the Atlantic. Any one of the pursuing British ships could have and should have tacked at the same time and overhauled the *Cyane.*

An hour later the *Levant* had dropped so far back that Capt. Stewart signalled Lieut. Ballard to tack her also. Things looked blue for the Americans, and Stewart himself expected to be taken within two hours. His officers thriftily began to make arrangements with the British officers they had as prisoners for the care

of their personal effects when they should exchange roles.

The *Newcastle* was firing by divisions, her shot striking the water within 200 yards of the *Constitution.* The British officers who enjoyed the perilous freedom of the *Constitution's* decks could distinguish their fellow-officers perched, spy-glass to eye, in the *Newcastle's* hammock nettings.

Then several strange things happened.

Sir George Collier, in the *Leander,* was senior officer. His ship was furthest astern, and he saw least of what was happening. He signalled the *Acasta* to tack after the *Levant.* The *Acasta* had gained until "she had brought the *Constitution* to bear upon her weather cathead." A few minutes more and she would have been in her wake, and coming up on her. The silent *Acasta* was sailing faster than the *Newcastle,* which was killing her own wind by her cannonading.

Captain Kerr, of the *Acasta,* says the historian James, had an honorable wound, which would have served him for an excuse, as a similar wound, and on a similar occasion, had once served the greatest naval captain of the age. "Leave off action? Now damn me if I do! You know, Foley, I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind sometimes," were Nelson's words. But Kerr reluctantly saw his signal and obeyed.

Sir George Collier had been bamboozled by an American privateersman into the belief that the *Constitution* was out in company with two other heavy frigates, the *President* and the *Congress,* or the captured and refitted *Macedonian.* Capt. Stewart was afterwards accused of painting the *Cyane* to look like a 36-

gun frigate. The mist or the paint brush must have disguised the poor little captured vessels very thoroughly if Sir George Collier could not recognize them as lightweights of his own navy; but—

"Kerr can do wonders but not impossibilities," Sir George told his lieutenant when the *Acasta* tacked. "I believe I must go around, as when the ship that tacked first hears the *Acasta* engaged she will naturally come to her consort's assistance."

He could not have known that the "ship that tacked first" was the little *Cyane,* or that her consort was the still littler *Levant,* for it was certain that the *Acasta* could make mincemeat of both of them.

Honestly believing he was sending the *Acasta* after such ships as the *President* and *Congress* Sir George turned his own ship around for her support. To complete the mistake the distinguishing pennants for the *Acasta's* signal on board the *Leander* got foul; and the *Newcastle,* after replying "Flags not distinguishable," concluded the order to tack applied to her, too; so she also hove around on the opposite tack, and the *Constitution* was left free to sail home!

One of the British officers, prisoner aboard her, strove to hide his chagrin by pretending to read the signal.

"*Newcastle* reports springing her foretopsail yard," he told the Americans, as that ship's query-signals fluttered out. But it was with sinking hearts that the till now jubilant prisoners saw their squadron romping away from them. The *Constitution* was the luckiest frigate that ever floated; three times matched in mortal combat, but always against a much weaker foe; three times pursued by superior force and never

touched. Three-quarters of an hour after she vanished in the haze in this last pursuit she was completely becalmed. Had the British squadron kept after her she would have had to sink or surrender then, for they could have taken her by a boat attack.

Lieut. Ballard ran the *Levant* back to Porto Praya, Americans possessing a great respect for the sanctity of neutrality at times. So sacred did the prize-lieutenant consider the soil of the Portuguese colony that he ran the *Levants'* jib-boom over the walls of the harbor battery. The hundred British prisoners who had been left behind welcomed him as warmly as they had speeded the departure of Capt. Stewart. They banged at the *Levant* with the guns they had commandeered, the *Acasta* came in, anchored, and opened fire, the *Newcastle* did the same, and last of all the *Leander* had a shot. The balls flew high, and tumbled some of the Portuguese houses down.

By keeping his men flat on their faces Lieutenant Ballard saved their lives. Twice he hoisted the Stars and Stripes on the *Levant* and twice he lowered them, before his surrender was accepted. That especially active piece of bunting rightfully belongs to the case in Annapolis, which contains the British flag labelled with the *Levant's* name. It would tell the story more truthfully than does the inscription which mentions only the fact that the *Levant* was captured by the *Constitution* off Madeira, and that the *Cyane* was captured in the same action and says nothing of the *Levant's* recapture before she or her flag could reach an American port.

XXIX.

British Bluejackets and Yankee Privateers

FOUR flags of the British navy were lowered by American privateers in the War of 1812; but six American privateers wore the British naval commission pennant ere the war was over; and in all one hundred and forty-eight of these freelances were captured by His Majesty's ships. There were five hundred and twenty-six American privateers in the war, and through the vigilance of British convoy patrols three hundred and nineteen of them never made a prize.

One of the American privateers which became an efficient British man-of-war was the *Lottery,* whose chivalrous capture by Capt. Byron, of the *Belvidera,* has already been recorded. She was renamed H.M.S. *Canso.*

Another American privateer to fall a victim to the bravery of British boat crews was the *Atlas.* She was added to the British navy as H.M.S. *St. Lawrence.* The night she was cut out from Ocracoke creek Lieut. Westphal, of H.M.S. *Sceptre,* Sir. George Cockburn's flagship, cut out a second letter-of-marque which was anchored near the *Atlas.*

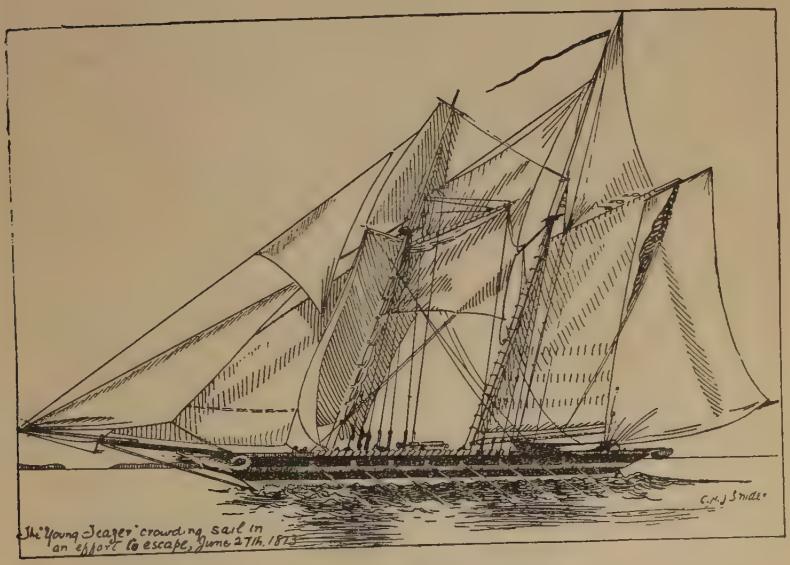
This was a still more valuable prize, the large brig *Anaconda* of New York, so named in the cheerful anticipation of "strangling" British commerce. That was the aim of the American privateering policy. The *Anaconda* measured 387 tons and was armed with

eighteen long 9-pounders. She made an excellent 18-gun brig for the British navy. In irony her original American name was retained on the British navy lists. Usually captured privateers were rechristened.

Reptilian names do not appear to have brought luck under the Stars and Stripes, for the purchased brig *Rattlesnake,* built at Medford, Pa., and added to the United States Navy in 1813, fell a prey to the British frigate *Leander,* a 50-rate of greater zeal than luck, commanded by Capt. Sir George Ralph Collier. The *Leander* took part in many chases which were less successful than her pursuit of the *Rattlesnake;* notably the last chase of the *Constitution.* The *Rattlesnake* measured 278 tons and had originally had sixteen guns; but she had lost some of her armament through having to jettison it in order to gain enough speed to escape from another frigate before the *Leander* sighted her; and although she sacrificed the remainder when the *Leander* pursued it did not save her. The *Rattlesnake* cost the United States government $18,000, indicating that for her size and time she was a valuable vessel. Lieut. Renshaw commanded her. Possibly she was the same brig *Rattlesnake,* Philadelphia privateer, which shared twenty-two prizes with the privateer schooner *Scourge* in the North Sea, in the summer of 1813. At any rate "she made a good end."

Of the many American privateers captured one pair have particular interest for Canadians—the *Teazer,* taken by Admiral Warren's flagship H.M.S. *San Domingo,* in 1812, and her successor, the *Young Teazer,* chased into Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, by the boats of H.M.S. *La Hogue,* and destroyed, June 27, 1813. The *Young Teazer* was blown up by her lieut-

enant, Frederick Johnston, and he and twenty-seven men of her crew of thirty-six perished with her. He had been captured when in command of the original *Teazer* and had been released on parole. He feared being shot for breaking the word of honor he had given not to again serve against Britain until regularly ex-



THE YOUNG TEAZER

changed. To this day hundreds of matter-of-fact Nova Scotians believe that the *"Teazer's* light" revisits the scene of her destruction on summer nights. The writer has spoken to many who said they had seen it.

FOUR American schooners, the *Dolphin,* privateer, and *Racer, Arab* and *Lynx,* letters-of-marque, were lying at anchor in Chesapeake Bay on the night of March 16, 1813, when five boats from the British blockading squadron groped their way in. Lieut. James Polkinghorne of H.M.S. *San Domingo,* had charge of the expedition. One hundred and five British sailors attacked after a fifteen-mile pull through the dark. There were two hundred and fourteen men in the American vessels, and they apparently expected the assault, for their schooners had their boarding nettings triced up and they fired on the boats when they heard them.

Two boats from H.M.S. *Marlboro* with forty men under Lieut. George Constantine Urmeston and Lieut. James Scott rushed the *Arab,* which had forty-five men and seven guns.

The *San Domingo's* pinnace, with twenty-three men, made short work of the *Lynx,* although she had forty men and six guns.

The *Racer,* with six guns and thirty-six men, was next attacked. She put up a stiff resistance, and it was during that sharp fight that Lieut. Polkinghorne was wounded. As soon as he had captured her he turned her guns on the remaining schooner, the privateer *Dolphin.* The latter was also attacked by the *Statira's* cutter, and the *Maidstone's* launch, with forty-two men in the two crews. The *Dolphin* had twelve guns and ninety-eight men and should have been able to beat off the entire British flotilla; but her crew was panic-stricken and she, too, surrendered.

The British boats got back to their ships through the wild March night with all four prizes. The *Racer*

became the British schooner *Shelburne,* and the *Lynx,* which, like her, was a large able vessel of between 200 and 225 tons, became His Majesty's schooner *Musquodoboit,* of fourteen guns.

H.M.S. *Shelburne,* of fourteen guns, which helped capture the American sloop-of-war *Frolic* in 1814, was the American letter-in-marque *Racer,* captured in the cutting-out expedition thus described.

The privateers lost sixteen men and the British boats thirteen in this brilliant dash; but no tattered bunting commemorates the fine example of the pluck and resource of the British bluejacket, and you may search many histories of the War of 1812 without finding a mention of the exploit which added two ships to our navy and four flags to our fleet.

PRIVATEERS went to sea not for glory but for gain, whether they were commissioned by Great Britain or by the United States. If they were not able to sail well and fight well they earned nothing in prize money and were a dead loss to owners, captain and crew. Therefore they were usually efficient. Only the fittest survived.

Many of the smaller craft of the Royal Navy, on the other hand, were sent to sea and kept in commission ill-armed and ill-manned because better vessels and better crews were needed for more important duties.

Bitter mention is made in the abundant pages of James of a small British schooner-of-war being captured by a Spanish rowboat. The rowboat was almost as large as the schooner and, what is more to the point, had more men. The marvel is that some of the smaller

craft of the British navy in 1812 could keep the sea at all, or ever escape capture if attacked.

On April 29, 1814, H.M.S. *Ballahou,* commanded by Lieut. Norfolk King, was triumphantly carried into Wilmington, Del., by the American privateer *Perry,* a schooner named in honor of the victor of Lake Erie.

The *Ballahou* was "a schooner-of-war of six guns" —nominally. In reality she was a wretched little vessel which had two twelve-pounder carronades mounted, and two more lashed in her hold and useless because she was not large enough to keep them on deck when it blew hard, without turning over under their weight. She measured seventy-six tons or less, and her crew numbered twenty men and boys. In the pages of either Marryat or Cooper—Cooper, more particularly—this should have been enough for victory, but it was not in real life. The American privateer measured 180 tons and had eighty men and five guns, one of them a long eighteen or twenty-four-pounder. Roosevelt, usually very fair in his history, calls her "a much heavier vessel," as she obviously was. Either the *Ballahou* herself, or one of her several sisters, had been built in Bermuda, of what the contemptuous James describes as "pencil wood," the so-called Bermuda cedar, in reality juniper; an excellent wood to resist the decay of the sea or assist in scribbling a despatch, but nothing to withstand cannon-shot.

Yet despite odds of four to one or worse the *Ballahou* fought her large assailant for ten minutes before she was captured. Where her flag went is not known, but her crew did not disgrace it.

THE *LANDRAIL'S* JACK

A small flag, 11 feet 4 inches long and 5 feet 5 inches wide, in the collection of naval trophies in the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., a relic of nineteen gallant Britons' fight against seventy-five American privateersmen.

Another small navy vessel captured by a privateer in the War of 1812 was the *Landrail,* commanded by Lieut. Robert Daniel Lancaster. Her tattered Union Jack is in the collection at Annapolis.

The *Landrail* was of 76 tons and was armed with four twelve-pounder carronades. She is spoken of as a "cutter" by the historians, but that refers to her rating, not necessarily to her rig. Yachtsmen understand by a cutter a vessel with one mast and a topmast and bowsprit, and divided headsails. There were many true cutters larger than the *Landrail,* but she probably was schooner-rigged, with two masts.

Neither the *Ballahou* nor the *Landrail* were fit for other duty than despatch carrying or coast patrols, but the *Landrail* on December 16, 1812, had taken part in the British chase of the French 40-gun frigate *Gloire.*

The *Landrail* was crossing the English Channel with despatches on the twelfth of July, 1814, when she was pursued by the American privateer schooner *Syren* of Baltimore, Capt. J. D. Daniels, another able vessel of 180 tons, armed with one long eighteen-pounder, four long six-pounders and two eighteen-pounder carronades. She had seventy-five men. The chase lasted an hour and ten minutes, the *Syren* losing ground when she yawed to bring her guns to bear, but eventually closing in on the smaller vessel. Her armament was so much heavier than the *Landrail's* that she should have been able to choose her distance and sink the British cutter without the latter being able to answer with one shot.

After seventy minutes of firing the *Syren* so far crippled the *Landrail* that she got abreast of her. Then for forty minutes longer the two fought a close action

at pistol shot distance. Three of the privateersmen were killed and nineteen wounded. But the ranks of the *Landrails* were thinned by seven of them being wounded, leaving twelve in a crippled vessel to fight fifty-seven. In these circumstances the *Landrail* surrendered.

This American triumph—a fairly won victory on the very threshold of Britain—was short lived and immediately recompensed. *Syren,* so spelled, was a favorite name under the Stars and Stripes. A brig so christened was built in Philadelphia for the United States navy in 1803, at a cost of $32,521—a figure which in our days of billion-dollar armaments is merely quaint. She took part in the American war against Tripoli in 1804, accompanying the ketch *Intrepid* with which Stephen Decatur destroyed the American frigate *Philadelphia,* after the latter had been taken by the Tripolitans.

The very day the privateer *Syren* captured a cub in the British lion's den the original brig *Syren* was captured by British sailors on the west coast of South Africa. Her commander, Capt. Parker, had died and Lieut. N. J. Nicholson was acting in his place. She was sighted by the British two-decker *Medway,* a seventy-four commanded by Capt. Brine.

The odds against the U. S. brig *Syren* were still greater than the odds against the privateer schooner *Syren's* victim. The brig beat to windward for eleven hours, throwing overboard her boats, anchors, cables, and spare spars. Lieut. Nicholson made a gallant and creditable effort to extricate his vessel from overpowering difficulties, but in vain. The *Medway* overhauled him, and he had to surrender. This *Syren*

mounted sixteen or eighteen guns and measured 250 tons. She had a crew of 125 men.

The *Landrail* herself never reached the United States. Her gallant crew made a tedious voyage to New York as prisoners of war. The vessel was started thither as a prize by her captor, but on the way she was recaptured, taken into Halifax, and restored to the Royal Navy.

PRIVATEERING was abolished by the Declaration of Paris in 1856. The United States of America did not sign the declaration, nor did Spain; but neither of these nations used privateers in their war of 1898.

American privateers took 1,344 British prizes in the War of 1812, a large number of vessels but a small percentage of Britain's total carrying trade. British privateer's captured American vessels; but not so many, for there were fewer American ships at sea. The convoy system brought thousands of British ships through the seas, safely if slowly. Sometimes as many as 300 merchantmen sailed in company, protected by a few ships wearing the whip-lash pennant of the Royal Navy.

In the Great War Britain lost 2,197 merchant vessels, of 7,638,020 tons, through enemy action—principally through Germany's 200 submarines, although mines and raiders like the *Emden* and *Karlsruhe* accounted for several hundred vessels. Submarines sank 6,635,059 tons of British shipping, and murdered 14,287 British victims.

The British Navy met the menace of the submarine against British commerce with the convoy system

in the Great War. The British Navy met the menace of the privateer against British commerce in the War of 1812 in the same way. The convoy system involved greater delays then, because it is more difficult to assemble and handle ships under sail than it is to handle ships under steam. But the convoy system worked satisfactorily in both centuries.

Individual British merchantmen often gave the predatory privateers gallant battle when the protection of the navy was, for one reason or another, not available.

The mild air of Madeira fanned the sails of a lurking American privateer schooner all the night of the first of November, 1813. The schooner was the *Globe,* of Baltimore, and by curious chance her commander was Capt. Moon. She kept standing off and on, waiting for two British packet brigs, the *Pelham* and the *Montague,* which she expected to leave the anchorage of Funchal. On the morning of November 2nd she discovered them already at sea, and piled on every stitch of canvas in pursuit.

At half-past ten the *Globe* began to overhaul the *Montague,* and the latter blazed away with her stern-guns. For two hours the fight and flight went on, the privateer gaining all the time. At 12.30 she put her helm hard over and ran the *Montague* aboard, the Yankee raiders dropping from their own long bowsprit on to the poorly manned quarterdeck of the packet.

But the British merchant jack was as good as a man-of-warsman when he had the weapons and the leadership. In this case the Montagues fought with capstan bars, cutlasses and everything that would hurt,

and in the melee the invaders forgot to lash the two vessels together. The *Montague* kept under way, the ships separated and six men of the *Globe's* crew, including two lieutenants, were left prisoners aboard the packet.

The *Pelham* now complicated things for the privateer by turning back and pouring in a broadside as she crossed her bows, which left her temporarily unmanageable. But Capt. Moon got the *Globe* going again and once more approached the *Montague*. The crew of that ship was already pretty badly shaken by the boarding fight; and after exchanging broadsides for ten minutes her brave commander was killed and the brig so disabled as to be out of control. Capt. Moon saw the mail-bags being thrown overboard, as though she was about to surrender, but before he could take possession the *Pelham* came back at him.

For an hour the merchantman and the privateer fought at pistol-shot distance. The captains of both were wounded severely. At the end of the hour's drubbing the American vessel staggered away, her sails riddled, her rigging hanging in loose strands, her crew pumping madly to keep her afloat till they plugged seven shot-holes between wind and water.

The *Pelham* and *Montague* were both too badly mauled and too short-handed to capture the *Globe*. They ran to Teneriffe for repairs; the *Globe* put into the Grand Canary. She admitted a loss of five killed, thirteen wounded and six prisoners. The British were told afterwards that she had had thirty-three killed and nineteen wounded; probably an exaggeration, just as Capt. Moon was afterwards told by a Spanish brig that twenty-seven Englishmen had been killed in

the fight. In reality the packets had six men killed and twelve wounded.

The incident is ignored in most histories of the war. Even the names of the brave British packet captains have been lost. Their red ensigns of the merchant marine might well hang along with the Red, Blue or White Ensigns of the British navy in any hall of fame. And their crews in ragged tarpaulins, the leavings after the press-gang had been through the ranks of merchant seamen with a fine-tooth comb, proved themselves worthy of inscription in the honor roll of the sea.

Five months later, off St. Nicholas Mole, between Cuba and San Domingo, on April 10, 1814, the American privateer *Saucy Jack,* of Charleston, fell in with a British ship named the *Pelham,*—either the peppery packet which had fought such a good fight with the *Globe* or a vessel similarly named after the eighteenth century Prime Minister. They fought for two hours, and it was only after the merchantman had her captain and eleven men wounded and four more killed out of her crew of forty that she was carried by boarding. She was a large vessel of 540 tons, bound from London to Port au Prince; possibly this was the packet's outward voyage after her return from her Madeira exploit. She had ten guns—more than her small crew could properly work. The privateer had two killed and nine wounded. She took her prize into Charleston, and, although the American navy had at the time great difficulty in getting men at all, she shipped one hundred and thirty picked hands for the next cruise between daylight and dark of one day! Privateering was more popular with both British and American seamen than service in the navy.

Another example of the way British merchantmen without convoy protection handled privateers when they had the chance is from the log of the ship *Hibernia*. She was a large vessel, with light armament and crew—six guns and twenty-two men. Near the Island of St. Thomas, in the Danish West Indies, the Baltimore privateer *Comet* overhauled her, coming alongside after a brief chase. The *Hibernia* was a dull sailer and stood high out of the water. For nine hours she fought the privateer, beating off the boarders every time they attempted to swarm up her sides.



FRAGMENTS OF THE RED ENSIGN OF H.M.S. *ST. LAWRENCE*

in the United States Naval Academy, at Annapolis, Md. The flag appears to have originally measured 14 ft. 2 inches by 5 ft. 6 inches.

She fought till eleven of her twenty-two men had been wounded and one was killed. Then the privateer, with three killed and thirteen wounded, hauled off. He probably did not know that only ten men were left unhurt in the British ship. The *Comet* was a most successful cruiser under her first commander, Capt. Thomas Boyle, but when the latter went into the *Chasseur* he seemed to take his former schooner's luck with him. This action was fought in March, 1814.

AFTER the war was really over—on Feb. 26, 1815—was fought a noteworthy action between a British man-of-war schooner and an American privateer; one which, while bravely contested by the losers, reflects greater glory on the victors—even though the victors were privateersmen, more concerned professionally in prize money than in prestige.

News of the Peace of Ghent, signed on Christmas Eve, 1814, had not reached H.M.S. *St. Lawrence* when she left Havana on Feb. 26, 1815, with some soldiers, marines and naval officers bound for New Orleans; nor did her passengers know that our great effort there had failed, and their services in the prospective siege would not be needed.

The *St. Lawrence* had had an exciting career. Not always had she flown the British flag. She was American-built and had been privateering against British commerce. As the *Atlas* of Philadelphia, under Capt. David Mafitt, she fought and took the *Planter* and *Pursuit,* two British ships laden with sugar, coffee, cotton, cocoa and West Indian products, in mid-Atlantic on Aug. 5, 1812. The *Pursuit* had sixteen guns and the *Planter* twelve, but they were only merchantmen with weak crews and the *Atlas* a fighting ship filled with fighting men.

The *Atlas* sent in other prizes and prospered until boats from the British squadron under Rear-Admiral Sir George Cockburn boldly cut her out from her anchorage in Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, on the night of July 13, 1813.

Being a large, handsome and well-found schooner of 241 tons, the *Atlas* was a welcome addition to the British fleet blockading the American coast, and was

put on the navy list under the name *St. Lawrence*. As such she was chased out of the mouth of the Patuxent by the American Commodore Barney with a fleet of fourteen gunboats and the block sloop *Scorpion*. The *Scorpion* herself was afterwards captured by the blockaders. The *St. Lawrence* took refuge with the *Dragon* 74, and the *Dragon* chased the pursuers back into the river and blockaded it.

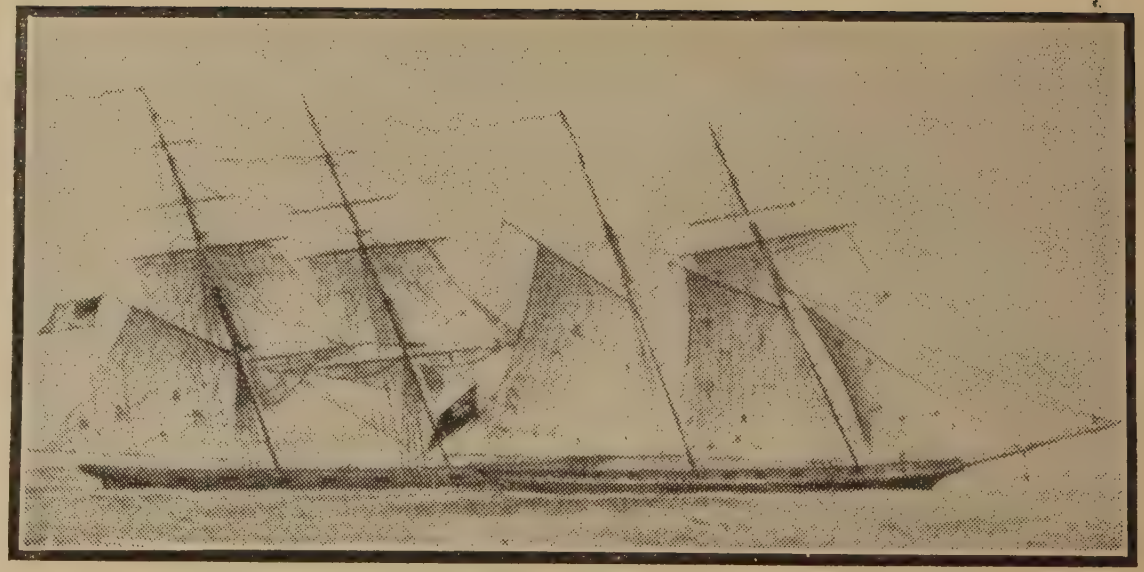
When the *St. Lawrence* left Havana a British convoy was lying there, ready to sail; and twenty miles from the harbor, and six miles off the coast of Cuba, the schooner sighted a privateer, lying in wait for the merchantmen, one of those prowlers of the deep which had been America's most effective weapon against Britain. This one was the brig *Chasseur* of Baltimore, Capt. Thomas Boyle; one of the handsomest vessels afloat and a most successful cruiser. She was somewhat larger than the *St. Lawrence,* measuring 277 tons. She had had her share of adventures in the war, taking thirty prizes. Eighteen of these she captured in three months in 1814 on the coasts of Britain, taking so many crews that she had to send a cartel in with one hundred and fifty paroled prisoners of war. She brought forty-three more prisoners home with her and fitted out for a West Indian cruise. This was less lucky than the English one, for the *Barrosa* frigate chased her and she had to throw overboard ten of her sixteen-pounder carronades to effect her escape. From a prize captured shortly afterwards she had taken out some nine-pounder guns, but, not having cannon balls to fit them, she was forced to put a four-pound and a six-pound ball in each.

When the *Chasseur* sighted the *St. Lawrence* she

thought she was a running-ship on a passage; that is, a merchantman sailing independently of the Havana convoy, for which the privateer was waiting. Lieut. H. C. Gordon, commanding the *St. Lawrence,* eager to catch the sea-hawk, encouraged the impression. He crowded on sail as if to escape, but towed drags alongside so as to allow the *Chasseur* to overtake him. All the ports but three on the side opposite the enemy were kept closed, so that the extent of the vessels' armament could only be guessed; the red ensign, then used both by merchant ships and some vessels of the Royal Navy, was hoisted, and only a stern chase gun was fired.

Both vessels were boiling along with the northeast tradewind blowing fresh a-beam. The *St. Lawrence's* drags were not needed, for in a heavy gust her foretopmast snapped and the foretopsail and jib flew off to leeward, in the direction of the *Chasseur.* The latter was coming up rapidly. Dropping her drags and hauling close on the wind, the *St. Lawrence* suddenly displayed ten ports on her larboard side and opened fire with round, grape and musketry as the *Chasseur* ranged abreast of her at pistol shot. The *St. Lawrence* had fourteen 12-pounder carronades and one long 9-pounder, armament roughly the equal of that of the *Chasseur.*

The privateer brig with her rakish spars shot ahead so fast that Lieut. Gordon feared she would cross the *St. Lawrence's* bows and rake her. To prevent this he suddenly put his schooner's helm up and tried to cross the *Chasseur's* stern and give her the same treatment. The wary privateer, however, kept away also, running with the wind on the quarter, and the manoeuvre both foiled the *St. Lawrence's* intention and placed the brig to windward of her.



THE *CHASSEUR* (LEFT) AND THE *ST. LAWRENCE* (RIGHT).

The old American lithograph from which this is taken probably gives an accurate portrait of both vessels, but it is incorrect in that it shows the foretopmast of the *St. Lawrence* as standing. That spar was carried away before the battle began. The portrait of the *St. Lawrence* corresponds to the portrait of her when she was the privateer *Atlas,* shown in an earlier chapter.

For fifteen minutes the two vessels fought hammer and tongs, at a distance narrowing down from two hundred feet. The *Chasseur* was badly cut up aloft and had lost five men killed and eight wounded, of her crew of eighty-nine men and a few boys. The *St. Lawrence* had suffered even more severely, six men being killed and seventeen wounded. Her crew was seventy-five men and boys nominally, but some of these seem to have been absent in prizes. The supernumeraries she was carrying to New Orleans should, however, have made up for this discrepancy.

Seeing, as the ships drew near, that he had now a decided superiority in numbers, Capt. Boyle had recourse to the privateer's favorite solution of a doubtful conflict—the boarding pike.

The *St. Lawrence* having lost the weather gauge by her unfortunate manoeuvre, it was not difficult at all to change the *Chasseur's* course so as to fling her on board of the vessel to leeward. As the two sides touched the American fired a broadside from her makeshift guns and her crew boarded through the smoke, with loud huzzas. In the very act the *St. Lawrence's* flag came down. She had been hard hit and felt she could resist no longer. She had fought well; but not as well as such vessels as the *Dominica* or the *Ballahou* or the *Landrail,* against greater odds.

Capt. Boyle released the *St. Lawrence* as a cartel, in compassion to her wounded, and sent her back to Havana, with her crew on parole. Lieut. Gordon gave him a letter, in event of his being captured, testifying to "his obliging attention and watchful solicitude to preserve our effects and render us comfortable during the short time we were in his possession"; in

which, he added, the captain "was carefully seconded by all his officers."

Capt. Boyle reported to his owners: "I should not willingly have sought a contest with a King's vessel, knowing that is not our object; but my expectations were at first a valuable vessel and a valuable cargo also. When I found myself deceived the honor of the flag entrusted to my care was not to be disgraced by flight." The letter does Capt. Boyle credit. He liked the pen. When he was picking up prizes on the coasts of Britain he sent in by the cartel which carried his paroled prisoners a proclamation declaring "all of the ports, harbors, bays, creeks, rivers, inlets, outlets, islands and sea coast of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in a state of strict and rigorous blockade"—by his one brig!

The *St. Lawrence's* ensign, so tattered through the ravages of time that the Union Jack in it is almost all that is recognizable, hangs as a trophy in the United States Naval Academy, with the flags of the *Landrail* and the *Dominica,* although none of these vessels was captured by a ship of the United States Navy. The repository of these trophies is, however, a fitting one. The *St. Lawrence's* is a small flag, apparently originally measuring 14 feet 2 inches by 5 feet 6 inches. Six brave men gave their lives to save it, five equally gallant gave theirs to gain it. Twenty-five others suffered wounds to prevent or ensure its being hauled down. It is impossible to look upon its faded shreds without feeling veneration and sympathy for their valorous efforts. One would like, also, to behold the flag of Capt. Boyle of the *Chasseur;* not as a trophy, but in order to pay tribute to the memory of the gallant captain of that gallant brig.

XXX.

A Dehorned Hornet

IF you were the commander of a ship, coming up fast on an enemy vessel which had put two of your country's ships under, and just as the foe was in your grasp, one of your marines fell overboard—what would you do?

If you were a Hun you would leave him to drown, arguing with German logic that it was better for one marine to perish than for you to certainly miss an Iron Cross. Being British, you would solve the problem in the same way as did Rear-Admiral Sir George Burleton, K.C.B., and Capt. John Bayley, in H.M.S. *Cornwallis,* more than a hundred years ago.

On Jan. 20, 1815, the U.S.S. *Peacock* and the U.S.S. *Hornet* slipped out of New York, bound for the southern seas and the British merchantmen which plied them. They were accompanied by the store-brig *Tom Bowline,* and expected to rendezvous with the U.S.S. *President* and Stephen Decatur at Tristan d'Acunha, that isolated isle which sticks up in the South Atlantic midway between Africa and America. They did not know that Decatur was a prisoner and his ship a prize on her way to a British dockyard; and they did not know that the war had ended a month before.

The *Hornet* had distinguished herself earlier when commanded by Capt. James Lawrence, by sinking the British brig *Peacock.* The *Hornet's* consort *Peacock*

was so named to commemorate this victory. The two separated during the voyage. On the 23rd of March, when about to anchor at the appointed rendezvous off Tristan d'Acunha, the *Hornet* was sighted by the British brig-sloop *Penguin,* Capt. James Dickinson. The *Penguin* also did not know of the war's end and was hunting the American privateer *Young Wasp.*

Three days before this Capt. James Biddle of the *Hornet* had been informed of the peace by a neutral vessel spoken. Biddle, by the way, had been first lieutenant in the *Wasp* when she fought the *Frolic.* He was not necessarily bound to take the neutral's word; and as the *Penguin's* first greeting was a gunshot, the *Hornet* not improperly replied with a broadside. The *Penguin* retorted in kind, and for half an hour they hammered one another.

The *Penguin* was another of the contract-built brigs slapped together to meet the emergency of a fresh war; commissioned for the first time in November, 1813, but not sent out until September of the next year when she got to sea with a hard-scrabble crew of seventeen little boys and a hundred and five old cripples or younger victims of the pressgang.

American writers speak of her having a "picked crew." They were picked from poor pastures. Of all her company just twelve had been in action before. Some of the old men had died on her voyage south.

At the Cape of Good Hope the *Penguin* got a dozen marines from the *Medway.*

The *Hornet* had 165 first-class fighting men, and carried eighteen 32-pounders, two long eighteens and two four-pounder swivels. The *Penguin* had sixteen 32-pounder carronades and two long sixes, not much

heavier than the *Hornet's* swivels; giving the latter the advantage of four heavy guns and forty-three well trained seamen.

The result was what might have been expected. The *Penguin* was soon crippled. Her carronades turned half-way round with each discharge or kicked and rolled over backwards. It was blowing fresh and there was a high sea tumbling. The *Penguin's* guns were as great a menace to her crew as were the enemy's.

Capt. Dickinson did what other brave British captains had done. He tried to board; but as he ordered the helm hard-up for that purpose he was shot dead.

Lieutenant James McDonald drove the *Penguin* for the *Hornet's* starboard side. Her plunging bowsprit tore away the *Hornet's* mizzen-shrouds, spanker-boom and stern davits, and snapped off as it thudded down on the *Hornet's* taffrail with the scend of the sea. With the breaking of the bowsprit the *Penguin's* foremast had no support, and fell inboard on the port guns.

The brig hung for a moment on the *Hornet's* starboard quarter. Capt. Biddle understood an English officer to say the *Penguin* surrendered. He jumped on his own taffrail, bidding his marines to cease fire and his boarders to stand by. Two marines of the *Penguin,* thinking he was leading a boarding party, fired at him from their forecastle, and one ball hit him in the neck. The ships surged apart amid a hailstorm of musketry, which killed both of the British marines and many more men crowded in the *Penguin's* bows.

Lieutenant McDonald attempted to turn the *Penguin* around to get the starboard batteries to bear, but she was an unmanageable wreck, and at 2.35 p.m., 50

ENSIGN OF THE *PENGUIN*, greatly decayed, preserved in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.

minutes after the action began, he hauled down the "St. George's ensign," with captain, boatswain and eight seamen killed or dying, twenty-eight men wounded and the ship so much cut up that her captors set her on fire and scuttled her.

The first prisoner to step on board the *Hornet* was Midshipman Edward B. Kirk. He saw buckets and brooms busy on the decks, removing all signs of battle, and a body being thrown overboard. As the crew lifted their comrade to the gangway he gave a convulsive twitch, and they dragged him back from overside. The man's lower jaw had been shot away, but he still lived; and in a few days Mr. Kirk saw him walking about the deck with his head bandaged!

WHEN Decatur did not turn up at the rendezvous at Tristan d'Acunha, the *Hornet,* joined by the *Peacock,* steered eastward for the Indies and their wealth. On the 27th of April, southeast of the Cape of Good Hope, they sighted a large ship a long way ahead.

All day the loot-hunters strained towards the distant dot which barely broke the sea line. The wind was light. They could not tell whether their quarry was going or coming. It was probable that they were so far off that they could not be seen from her mastheads; she, although a much larger vessel, was barely visible from theirs.

When the next day came the ocean was like glass, and the chase was hardly any nearer.

"It was very calm," wrote an American officer of the *Hornet,* whose record is preserved in that faded old book, Brannan's Military and Naval Letters, "and

nothing but murmurs were heard throughout the ship, as it was feared we should lose our anticipated prize.

"Many plans had been formed by us for the disposal of our plunder.

"The seamen declared they would have the berth-deck *carpeted with East India silk,"* (the printing reproduces the antique journal-keeper's underlining) "supposing her to be an Indiaman from India; while the officers, under the impression that she was from England, were making arrangements how we should dispose of the *money, porter, cheese,* etc., etc.

"Nothing perplexed us more than that we should not be able to take out all the good things before we should be obliged to destroy her.

"We were regretting that our ship did not sail faster, as the *Peacock* would certainly capture her first and would take out many of the best and most valuable articles before we should get up.

"We all calculated our fortunes were made, but alas, we caught a Tartar."

As this second day wore on the wind blew from the northwest and the raiders, with clouds of studding-sails puffed out on each side, began to "raise" the stranger rapidly. They found she was standing north, close-hauled on the wind.

At 2.45 p.m. the *Peacock,* the nearer American vessel, showed signs of a decreasing desire to make the stranger's acquaintance, and a few minutes later her studdingsails disappeared and she hauled sharp on the wind, flying the signal, "Enemy ship of superior force!"

Here was a fine kettle of fish! The *Peacock* went off on one tack. The *Hornet* chose another. The

stranger could not steer both ways at once. She elected to pursue the *Hornet,* which was at that time eight miles on her weather bow.

By sundown the horrified *Hornets* had learned that the supposed Indiaman was a fast sailer and likely to overtake them, if the wind blew. By nine o'clock they could tell, by the double row of lighted ports, that she was not a harmless merchantman at all, but a two-decked line-of-battle ship!

"Destruction apparently stared us in the face," wrote the officer quoted, "if we did not soon surrender, yet no officer, no man in the ship showed any disposition to let the enemy have the poor little *Hornet.*

"Many of our men had been impressed and imprisoned for years in their horrible service, and hated them and their nation with the most deadly animosity; while the rest of the crew, horror-struck by the relation of the sufferings of their shipmates who had been in the power of the English, and now equally flushed with rage, joined heartily in execrating the present authors of our misfortune."

Capt. Biddle's only hope was in lightening his ship sufficiently to make her float faster than the foe in the gentle winds which prevailed. He knocked away the wedges of the masts to make the spars more limber. He dumped twelve tons of kentledge, or inside ballast, overboard and some of his roundshot. The ship, equipped for a long cruise, had many spare spars. These were next thrust overside. Then the great sheet anchor was cut from the bows, and its long cable thrown after it.

At two o'clock in the morning the stranger was abreast of the *Hornet,* or even a little ahead of her,

but still far to leeward. She tacked; and the *Hornet* did the same, bringing her astern. By daylight she was within gunshot; and the sun's early rays greeted English colors at her peak, with a rear-admiral's flag at the mizzenmast head. The pursuer was H.M.S. *Cornwallis,* 74, flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir George Burleton, a clumsy old teak-built East Indiaman which had been taken into the navy.

The *Cornwallis* opened with her bow-chasers. Thirty shot flew over the *Hornet* or between her spars. Capt. Biddle cut away his remaining anchor and cable and threw overboard fifty tons of kentledge, all his small boats, and more of his shot. The *Hornet's* launch, a large, heavy boat, stowed on deck, was broken up by the crew and thrown into the wake, piece by piece. Six of the guns were pushed out through the portholes and dropped into the sea.

The concussions of her shots deadened the *Cornwallis'* way in the paltry wind, and for a time the lightened *Hornet* slowly drew ahead.

By eleven o'clock the two-decker was near her. Capt. Biddle now threw overboard all his remaining cannon but one long gun.

There was a standing challenge between the *Hornet* and the *Loup Cervier,* as the British had rechristened the first American *Wasp* when they captured her. The *Wasp* had been the *Hornet's* sister ship, and Biddle was lieutenant in her when she was taken. To be ready to meet her the *Hornet* had added to her regular armament and went about "heeled" like a "two-gun, hundred-per-cent, fighting western he-man" of the modern movie drama. But the brass swivels from her quarterdeck and fifty-bucketshot musketoons

from her tops followed the big guns to Davy Jones' locker. All the powder and ball was hove up from the hold, and as much ballast as could be spared without making it certain that the ship would fall over on her side. Overboard it all went, and with it the last of the spare spars.

At noon the faint breeze shifted and "faired" the *Cornwallis,* bringing her up by degrees. She began firing again. She was only three-quarters of a mile away, and the sea was smooth. She should have sunk the *Hornet* in five minutes. But for some reason most of the shot hurtled overhead. One went through the jib. Two struck the hull. A third hit the deck forward of the main hatch, bounced up and went through the foresail.

The crew of the *Hornet,* wrote the officer of that ship, "had kept the deck during all the preceding night, employed continually in lightening the ship, were excessively fatigued and under momentary expectation of falling into the hands of a barbarous and enraged enemy.

"The shot that fell on the maindeck struck immediately over the head of one of our gallant fellows, who had been wounded in our glorious action with the *Penguin,* where he was lying in his cot, very ill with his wounds; the shot was near coming through the deck, and it threw innumerable splinters all around this poor fellow, and struck down a small paper American ensign which he had hoisted over his bed.

"Capt. Biddle," continues the flamboyant narrator, "mustered the crew and told them he was pleased with their conduct during the chase, and hoped still to perceive that propriety of conduct which had always

marked their character and that of the American tar generally; that we might soon expect to be captured, etc.

"Not a dry eye was to be seen at the mention of capture. *The rugged hearts of the sailors, like ice before the sun, warmed by the divine power of sympathy,* wept in unison with their brave commander.

"Not a person on board had the most distant idea that there was a possibility of escape.

"We all packed our things, and waited till the enemy's shot should compel us to heave-to and surrender, which appeared certain."

The cannonade made it almost a dead calm. In desperation the *Hornet* men and their beloved commander dried their mutual tears, attacked their own raised forecastle with axes and crowbars, and threw the pieces overboard. Then they unshipped the capstan, a drum-shaped piece of apparatus which worked like a windlass on end, and rolled that overboard. They dumped their salt horse and hardtack to the fishes, they threw overboard all their muskets, cutlasses, boarding pikes and irons. They even unshipped the *Hornet's* bell and sacrificed that; and last of all they threw away the leathern boarding helmets, reinforced with iron plates, which had been provided for the duel with the British sloop.

The *Cornwallis* ceased firing at two p.m., as she had shaken all the wind out of her own sails. For half an hour her gun crews rested, watching the *Hornet's* men in the distance make a greater wreck of their ship than the British shot had done.

Then the wind came in again—from ahead. The *Hornet* got it first. Her men trimmed her by piling

up along the weather bulwarks, making the weight of their bodies take the place of the kentledge they had dumped overboard.

The *Cornwallis* also braced sharp up on the wind. She leaned so much as to indicate that she, too, had jettisoned some of her ballast in order to speed her up while the wind was light and behind her. The leverage of two decks of cannon, high above the water level, made her heel much more in proportion than the empty hull of the *Hornet.* But she had a reputation for "crankness," as sailors call a ship's tendency to heel over.

The first few moments of the renewed chase seemed to emphasize the hopelessness of the *Hornet's* position. The *Cornwallis,* although sagging to leeward, was footing fast, and the foam sparkled under her bows with increasing distinctness.

Suddenly through the *Cornwallis* rang the cry from forward, "Man overboard!"; and almost immediately there appeared in the tumble of the whitening wake the agonized face of a Royal Marine. The poor chap had slipped and fallen through the entry-port as the ship heeled sharply in a freshening gust!

Rear-Admiral Sir George Burleton, K.C.B., commander of the "barbarous and enraged enemy," was worthy of his rank and knighthood. Without an instant's hesitation the orders volleyed from admiral to captain, from captain to sailing master, from sailing master to crew: "Let go and clew up royals!" "Down the flying jib!" "Raise tacks and sheets!" "Square the main yard!" "Hard down the helm and man the quarterboat!"

With sails flailing and thundering in their gear

the *Cornwallis* described a great arc until she halted, prancing and pawing like a checked horse. The davit tackles purred. The quarter-boat dropped to the water and a dozen oarsmen bent the white ash blades as they drove her through the brine. Far, far back the shining glazed hat and scarlet tunic-shoulders of the marine bobbed in the vast ocean. He was still swimming. They got him; but it was half an hour before the *Cornwallis* filled away again after the chase. She could not leave her boat's crew to row to India, Africa or America which was the only alternative to being picked up.

On the 9th of the following June the mere shell of a cruiser crawled into the Portuguese port of San Salvador, in Brazil. It was all that was left of the warship *Hornet;* a "warship" without cannon, capstan, anchor, cable, boats or bullets. As her efflorescent officer recorded:

"This was a truly glorious victory over the horrors of banishment and the terrors of the British floating dungeon. I put forth my expression of everlasting gratitude to Him, the Supreme Author of our being, who had thus signally delivered us from the power of the cruel and vindictive enemy. Never has there been so evident an interposition of the goodness of the Divine Father; my heart with gratitude acknowledges His supreme power and goodness."

Piety, patriotism and plunder kept as strange company in 1815 as they do to-day. The pious author of these last expressions was the self-same gentleman who was "perplexed" that they should not be able to take out all the good things of the supposed helpless merchantman before they should have to destroy her. But

he was not far wide of the mark when he entertained the sentiment:

> God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform.

It seems strange that 165 American commerce-raiders and their ship should be saved by the near-drowning of a British marine and the humanity of a British admiral.

The more practical Capt. Biddle, bringing home nothing but the skin of the ship in which he set out to avenge the *Wasp* and wipe out British commerce, had an application for a court of inquiry into his conduct all written out as he came to anchor. He was a brave man and had shown nothing but courage and skill on his disastrous cruise; but probably no one alive was better pleased when the word was passed up from the shore boats of San Salvador:

"The war is over. Peace was signed last Christmas Eve."

As James Barnes says, the *Cornwallis* fired the last gunshots in the War of 1812.

XXXI.

The *Magnet* and Oswego

ON May 6, 1814, in the final phase of the War of 1812, we stormed and captured Oswego, then the second, now the first American port in importance on Lake Ontario.

In the collection of trophies at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md., is one flag which has for long puzzled the curator, Prof. Sidney Gunn, and his predecessors.

It is a British ensign, of the same style as the naval White Ensign of to-day, white, with a red St. George's cross on it and the Union Jack in one corner. The white of the old flag is now faded to a gentle greyish yellow, with the red parts like brick-dust and the blues alone approximating their original tint.

It is very, very tattered, held together only by the network of stitches which fasten the threads to a backing of unbleached linen. It is marked "Beresford," but the absence of records of the capture of any vessel of that name has puzzled its possessors.

There was a gunboat of 70 tons or less in the battle of Lake Champlain, 1814, named *Marshal Beresford,* but the writer is not aware that she was captured, and the flag is too big for her. It is 9 feet 7 inches wide and 18 feet 6½ inches long—larger than that of the brig *Boxer,* a vessel four times the size of the gunboat *Beresford.*

There was a schooner, afterwards changed to a

brig, on Lake Ontario in the War of 1812, named first *General Beresford* and afterwards *Netley*. She was never captured by the Americans; she served with distinction through the war. Her captain and crew took part in the glorious cutting-out expedition at Fort Erie, in which the American schooners *Somers* and *Ohio* fell a prey to a handful of British seamen. They carried their ship's gig on their own shoulders up from Lake Ontario, thirty miles away, to do the plucky deed.



THE *BERESFORD* FLAG AT ANNAPOLIS—all that is left to-day of the ensign probably flown by the *Magnet* at Oswego, May 6th, 1814.

But Isaac Chauncey, the American commodore, firmly believed and reported in official despatches that his squadron had destroyed the *Beresford* when they chased a British brig that was coming over from Toronto on August 5, 1814, with troops for Niagara. The vessel, cut off by the Americans, ran ashore at Ten Mile Creek, west of the Niagara river. The *Sylph* was ordered in to capture or destroy her, but when she anchored for that purpose the brig burst into flames.

Her troops had all been safely landed, and her captain set her on fire before leaving.

Commodore Chauncey believed this vessel to be the *Beresford,* and it is quite possible that some of the *Sylph's* crew obtained one of her flags from the wreck, and that the commodore, in good faith, marked it *Beresford* and forwarded it to Washington.

The vessel destroyed was, however, the brig *Magnet.* She was the *Beresford's* sailing partner, and, like her, she had been a schooner and had been rerigged. Like the *Beresford,* too, she had been renamed. She was originally the *Sir Sidney Smith,* built at Point Frederick, Kingston, in 1806, and was armed with 14 guns.

Very probably the fragments of bunting now preserved at Annapolis are the identical flag the *Magnet* flew when she played her glorious part in the storming of Oswego, May 6th, 1814. Right in the river's mouth worked the *Magnet* that day, furthest in of all the British vessels, because of her light draught. How we stormed Oswego is thus told by Malachi Malone in "In the Wake of the Eighteen-Twelvers":

"We lay closest to the fort, and they hailed red-hot shot on us from the ramparts. We came back with cold grape and round. They slithered our sails to ribbons and cut up our rigging till it hung in tangled bunches of hemp. 'We can't get out o' here, lads,' hailed Captain Popham, "for our gear's all gone, but—' A ball whizzed, and his right hand, holding the trumpet, dropped, mangled. He raised the trumpet with the other hand and finished—'we'll give them the worth of their money, since they want us to stay so badly!'

STORMING OF OSWEGO, MAY 6th, 1814.—From a water color, by Lieutenant Hewitt, who captured the American flag. The picture is now in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures, in the Reference Library, College street. Lieutenant Hewitt, as modest as he was brave, has not crowded the canvas with himself. His is the almost indiscernible figure up the pole from which flies the Stars and Stripes. The *Magnet* is the smallest vessel in each of the two views of the attack, the third from the right.

"Up the steep slope of the hill to the fort swarmed two hundred bluejackets with their boarding pikes. Sir William Howe Mulcaster, of the old *Royal George* at their head. Sir James Yeo, the Commodore, was ashore, too. Along the back of the fort hill, from the landing place, streamed the kilted Glengarries and the De Wattevilles, in red tunics and white breeches, and the Royal Marines in their glazed stiff hats, red coats and blue trousers. But they could fight, those same Johnnies, and the Yanks who had potted them from the shelter of the woods, were now on the run for the fort.

"By this time we were on fire. The red-hot shot from the furnaces in the fort made our tarred rigging sizzle and the flame licked up the masts.

" 'Buckets aloft!' called Captain Popham, and the topmen scrambled up the flaming ratlines and laid out along the scorching yards with leather buckets on long lines and soused everything. I could see through the smoke the bluejackets were up the bank now, and Lieutenant Laurie, Sir James Yeo's secretary, was scrambling over the ramparts first of all. Then another burst o' flame along our decks made everybody's heart thump, for fire in a wooden ship, ballasted with gunpowder, is a pretty sure passport to the big beyond!

"The bulwarks had taken fire, but we smothered them with sand and tarpaulins, when there came a yell from aloft. A brace of red-hot chain shot had struck the foretop and sheared away the maintopmast stays'l, where it was stowed there. It floated down like a flaming parachute on to the fo'c's'le head by the powder gangway. The sailing master rushed forward with a boarding pike, caught the mass as it fell, and



THE ATTACK ON OSWEGO, MAY 6th, 1814.—THE FLEET STANDING IN FOR THE HARBOUR.—From an old water color in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures.

pitched it overboard. Then with a scream he dropped the pike and rolled down the gangway. Where his left arm had been hung a bloody mass of seared flesh and shredded jacket sleeve. A red-hot roundshot had got him.



THE *MAGNET*, PROBABLE OWNER OF THE *BERESFORD* FLAG.—From a water color in the John Ross Robertson Collection of Canadian Historical Pictures.

"I helped carry him to the cockpit. 'It'll have to come off at the shoulder,' I heard the surgeon say. Jimmy Richardson gritted his teeth, and then above the roar of the guns I heard rounds of cheers on cheers. I rushed on deck, sick with the smell of the surgeon's

shambles, and there on the hilltop, with his legs locked around the head of the fort flagpole, I could see a marine hanging. It was Lieutenant Hewitt. He had swarmed up, as nimble as a man-o'-warsman and had torn the big Stars and Stripes down with his hands. The colors had been nailed to the pole."

James Richardson, jr., the sailing-master mentioned, became an itinerant bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was born at Kingston, Ont. His son was surgeon in Toronto Jail until the present century. James Richardson Roaf, K.C., of Toronto, is a grandson. The vessel in which Sailingmaster Richardson lost his arm at Oswego was the *Montreal,* a larger vessel than the *Magnet.*

One hundred and more Mays have breathed all the tender hopefulness of spring over the scars our roundshot made in the ramparts of Fort Ontario that day. It is as unthinkable that we should turn our cannon on Oswego now as that we should bomb Rosedale in Toronto or make a bayonet charge through Shaughnessy Heights, Vancouver. The citizens of Oswego, N.Y., are too nearly our own people.

Admiral A. T. Mahan, in whose memorial hall this faded trophy hangs at Annapolis, says wisely:

> "Forget the wrongs of the earlier strife and look only to the common steadfast courage with which each side then bore its share in a civil conflict."

Yet poor, indeed, the British heart that can behold the frayed remnants of the so-called *Beresford* flag without feeling a thrill of pride in the gallant *Magnet's* presence at Oswego, under the command of Vice-Admiral (then Commander) Sir Edward Collier,

K.C.B.; in the sacrifice of James Richardson, jr.; and in the brave deed of Lieutenant John Hewitt, of the Royal Marines.

If Americans have wherewith to glory in their treasured trophy from the *Magnet's* wreck, somewhere on British soil—where, oh, where is the treasure kept? —is a trophy to answer them: the shot-torn Stars and Stripes from Fort Ontario at Oswego, torn down under fire by Lieutenant Hewitt one hundred odd years ago.

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